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MEMOIRS
OF THE
DANBY FAMILY.

MEMOIRS



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The Arbour at Rose Hill. (p. 7.)

Printed Dec. 10. 1794. by J. Neave, corner of St. Pauls Church Yard.

MEMOIRS
OF THE
DANBY FAMILY:

DESIGNED CHIEFLY
FOR THE
ENTERTAINMENT AND IMPROVEMENT
OF
Young Persons.

BY A LADY.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR E. NEWBERRY, CORNER OF
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1799.

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DANBY FAMILY:

DESCENDING CHIEFLY

FROM THE

ENTERTAINMENT AND IMPROVEMENT



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DEDICATION.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,

AS nothing is more uncertain than life, nor any thing so important as the acquiring of virtuous habits and worthy principles, I take this opportunity of addressing you on subjects of such infinite moment. It is my earnest desire to make you sensible of the great advantage and utility attendant on an early proficiency in virtue and piety. There is nothing that I so ardently wish, as to see you acquire such qualities as will contribute to your happiness in this world, and secure to you everlasting felicity in the world to come.

You, my dear son, will, I know, from the avidity with which you have read similar productions, feel yourself interested in the following pages. But let me conjure you not to read for amusement only. Attend minutely to the characters worthy of imitation. Consider well the sentiments that you will meet with in the work I am recommending to your notice ; many of which, I trust, are worthy of being adopted as your own. Although this little history is intended chiefly for young persons, yet I flatter myself there are passages which you may read with advantage, even in mature life. You may not at that period have a mother to watch over you, whose tender solicitude would be ever ready to warn you of approaching danger, and whose anxious concern for your present and future welfare would lead her to take every opportunity of confirming you in the habits of rectitude and truth.

Hitherto

Hitherto you have had every advantage which your early years could require—a father, the most attentive; an instructor, every way calculated to make you wise and good. Long, very long, may these advantages be yours! and O, may they produce an effect equal to our most sanguine wishes! Happy should I be, were I persuaded that the words which I now write would leave on your mind an impression not to be effaced.

With inexpressible pleasure your parents contemplate in your disposition indications of excellence. Divesting ourselves as much as possible of partiality, you appear to us artless, generous, and affectionate. O, my son, cultivate and cherish these estimable qualities! Suffer not the present purity of your mind to be sullied by future unworthiness. While you acquire knowledge in its various branches, be careful above all things to preserve untainted that rectitude of heart and
a. 2 mind,

mind, for the loss of which the world, be assured, has no recompence to offer. Pleasure may allure, vice may ensnare, and ambition prompt ; but, my son, it is virtue alone that can yield us any real good.

Before I close this short address, there is one circumstance that I have to mention, and which is to me highly interesting and important: more so than it is in my power to express. You have a sister, whom you even now regard with much affection ; she is several years younger than you. As she is now the object of your childish love, may she hereafter be dear and precious to your heart ! You may one day be her chief, perhaps her only protector. As you would guard a treasure whose value is above all estimation, so cherish and sustain this dear object of our mutual love, and never think you can do too much in discharging the duty which belongs to so sacred an office. Think with what tender concern

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she is committed to your care by an anxious mother, to whom you are both equally dear; and who looks forward with an equal degree of solicitude to the future welfare of each.

You, my beloved daughter, are yet too young to derive either instruction or amusement from the succeeding pages. At a proper age this volume will be put into your hands; and I hope that the effect it is designed to produce will be powerful and lasting. When you are told that they were dictated by the heart, and written by the hand of a parent, I trust you will read them with a degree of attention, such as that parent is entitled to expect. Were I certain that I should have it in my power to present to you myself this little production, I would defer to that period employing my pen on subjects which may now be considered as premature, because unsuited to your tender years; but I hope that what I now write will not appear to you less interesting on
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this account. Would I could convey to you even an imperfect idea of the tenderness with which I regard you ; the anxiety I feel for discharging aright the duty I owe you ! then would your heart overflow with filial love at the moment you peruse these lines, and, with tears of exquisite sensibility and gratitude, you would determine to imbibe the precepts I have endeavoured to inculcate, and impress upon your mind, in indelible characters, the words of a most affectionate mother.

Let me conjure you, my dear child, carefully to fortify your mind against every allurements with which vanity, pride, or pleasure, may assail your heart : as you value your present and everlasting peace, be ever on the watch against such dangerous encroachers. Consider well the qualities of Miss Danby ; and while you contemplate in *her* mind the piety, modesty, and artlessness, with which it is adorned, confirm in your *own* those virtues which

which cannot but excite your admiration and esteem. The character certainly is, in some measure, an ideal one; yet, I trust, there are many young ladies to whom it will apply: but admitting it to be an imaginary one, consider by whom it was drawn, and what were the feelings of the writer, and it will give to fiction the importance of the most interesting truths.

I will now say a few words respecting your nearest and most valuable connexions, and the sacred tie which binds you to your family. The endearing fondness which you now feel for the most affectionate of fathers, will, I doubt not, increase with increasing years; and I trust your dutiful behaviour will convince him that his tenderness meets with the most grateful return. May the love which now subsists between your brother and yourself be strengthened and confirmed by offices of mutual kindness; and may so endearing an intercourse

course render indissoluble an attachment which nature and friendship unite to form!

Adieu, my dear, my inexpressibly dear children; may God preserve, sustain, and bless you! may we long live together in harmony, love, and peace; and after spending on earth lives of piety and usefulness, may we serenely retire from this tumultuous scene, rejoicing in the hope, that after the sleep of death we shall behold that perfect day which shall present us blameless before our God and Saviour: then shall the infirmities incident to mortality be done away; and the faithful servants of God shall shine as the light for ever. That this may be my happy lot, and the lot of those I best love, shall be the constant prayer of your affectionate mother,



MEMOIRS

OF THE

DANBY FAMILY.

ON the summit of one of those gentle eminences which diversify and adorn the delightful county of Devon, stood the house of Mr. Danby, which was known by the name of Rose Hill. From the windows facing the west, the first object that presented itself to view, being contiguous to the house, was a gradually sloping lawn, divided from the adjacent meadows by a river of considerable magnitude, which flowed in various directions through the neighbouring valley, and at length emptied itself into the sea at the distance of about seven miles.

On the northern side of the house the ground was appropriated to useful gardens, an orchard, and shrubbery. In the rear of this convenient and pleasant habitation was an extensive farm-yard, well stocked with poultry, and furnished with buildings

of various kinds for the reception of grain, and for other purposes requisite in the farming business; Mr. Danby keeping the principal part of his estate in his own hands. The ground which lay towards the south, this gentleman had exercised his taste in decorating with peculiar elegance; and he took much pleasure in cultivating his favourite spot with unwearied assiduity, when more important concerns did not require his attention.

Mr. Danby was a great admirer of the works of Nature; and, wherever she presented a beauty, was careful not to violate the sacred offering. If he called in the assistance of Art, to heighten and embellish her design, he concealed as much as possible the traces of it; being desirous that the beautiful simplicity he so much admired should chiefly preside over the environs of Rose Hill. In the pleasantest part of this garden was a small mount, on which the intermingling branches of woodbine and jasmine were formed into an arbour, and while they afforded an agreeable shade, dispensed a most grateful odour.

From this little retreat an assemblage of interesting and pleasing objects was presented to the view of the beholder. Flowers of a countless variety reared their blooming heads, and perfumed the air with their fragrance. These lovely productions of nature were so disposed as to exhibit their respective beauties in the most advantageous manner.

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The adjacent as well as the distant country presented to the eye a scene varied and delightful, equal to what the most lively imagination could conceive. Meadow-grounds, corn-fields, and woods of various greens, combined to render the prospect infinitely beautiful. There, the majestic oak extended its copious branches, and offered to the languid traveller a secure shelter from the intense rays of the sun. Here, the tall elm reared its lofty head erect and stately, while the foliage of an humbler growth decorated the verdant landscape with the utmost luxuriance, and enriched the view with a thousand different shades.

To crown the whole, the ocean itself terminated the enchanting scene with awful dignity. In contemplating this august and sublime object, the imagination is apt to be carried insensibly from the rural beauties, with which the hand of Nature has decked our temperate and favoured climate; and, in idea, we are transported to distant regions, where the enervated Indian faints beneath the scorching rays of a meridian sun: or, pursuing a different course, we turn our thoughts towards the dreary country of the uninformed Laplander, and fancy we see him passing his gloomy and cheerless hours in his wretched habitation, patiently waiting until his long and tedious winter shall expire.

Having endeavoured to give my young readers some idea of Rose Hill, I shall now mention a few particulars

particulars respecting its inhabitants. Of the younger part of the family I shall not attempt a description; but suffer the different traits apparent in the characters of each gradually to unfold themselves. These traits, the circumstances which occur in our history, I trust, will bring to view.

Mr. Danby was formerly a merchant in London, but had devoted the early part of his life to study, and had received an education that, united to his natural abilities, would have qualified him for one of the learned professions. He had the misfortune to lose his parents when quite a boy, and was left to the care of an uncle, who, being engaged in mercantile concerns, persuaded his nephew, when he had completed his twentieth year, to quit the college, and occupy a place in his counting-house.

Mr. Danby, though by no means partial to this mode of life, could not resist the earnest and repeated solicitations of his uncle to adopt it. The old gentleman had no son, and was desirous to initiate his nephew into a business which he had for many years conducted with equal credit and success. Accordingly he removed to London; and if the employment in which he there engaged appeared at first irksome and disagreeable, custom soon rendered it more easy; and the kindness and attention of the old gentleman contributed much towards reconciling him to his situation. His nephew became a great favourite, and was very soon taken into partnership.

In about five years after this event, Mr. Danby married Miss Sophia Grey, now Mrs. Danby, a lady whose exemplary piety, superior abilities, and engaging manners, endeared her to her family and her friends in an uncommon degree. This marriage had taken place about six years, when the elder Mr. Danby died. He left his daughters in possession of affluent fortunes, and did not forget to testify his sense of the care, assiduity, and attention shown by his nephew to the business, by bequeathing him a handsome legacy.

As soon as Mr. Danby had recovered in some measure from the dejection of spirits occasioned by the death of his uncle, he applied himself with the utmost diligence to the regulation of his affairs. On their being completely settled, the result was, that he found himself in possession of eight thousand pounds, exclusive of some debts which he considered as precarious, and of his paternal estate at Rose Hill. He immediately acquainted Mrs. Danby with this circumstance, and, at the same time, expressed a wish of retiring to his little estate, and of spending the remainder of his days in improving his mind by study, educating his children, and cultivating his lands. Mrs. Danby acquiesced with the greatest readiness and pleasure in a proposal which so well suited her own wishes and inclinations. No time was lost in making the necessary preparations for their departure from London; and in the course of a few months they quitted the busy scene in

which they had so long been engaged, and took possession of their rural habitation in the county of Devon.

The felicity which Mr. and Mrs. Danby had pictured to themselves as awaiting them in this peaceful retreat they found fully realized. They were possessed of minds capable of deriving happiness from the purest sources: their days glided along in peace and tranquillity, crowned with those joys which flow from the practice of piety and virtue. When dispensing knowledge and instruction to their beloved children, they experienced the most rational delight, arising from the performance of so pleasing a duty: when they beheld the happy effects of their care and attention displayed in the intelligent and ingenuous minds of their young family, they felt a degree of pleasure which the heart of an affectionate parent alone can conceive. The society of Mr. and Mrs. Danby was deemed a valuable acquisition by the neighbouring families; whilst the industrious poor blessed the hour of their coming to reside among them.

Although this gentleman's income was infinitely more confined than that possessed by many of his neighbours, yet by a strict attention to the concerns of his farm, and a suitable economy observed by Mrs. Danby in the regulation of their domestic affairs, they were enabled to do much good, without exceeding the limits which prudence pointed

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out. Many poor children were regularly supplied with a wholesome and plentiful meal from Mrs. Danby's dairy, who would otherwise, it is to be feared, have often experienced the pain of unsatisfied hunger. The cottage of the humble and industrious labourer was furnished with many little comforts, which its owner would have been wholly unable to procure without the assistance of these kind friends.

At the time of our History's commencement, this excellent couple had resided at Rose Hill upwards of nine years, and were blessed with five promising children. *Charles Danby*, the eldest, had just entered his fourteenth year; *Sophia*, the next in succession, her thirteenth; *William* was two years younger; and *Fanny* about eight; while little *George*, who was the darling of the whole family, had scarcely seen four summers. Health, harmony, and love, presided at Rose Hill: if the former of these blessings met with occasional interruptions, uniform temperance and constant regularity greatly contributed to restore that valuable possession: and love and harmony were for a short time broken in upon, the most affectionate and tender reconciliation called forth those emotions known only to the generous and conciliating spirit of true benevolence and affectionate love.

I shall now introduce this happy family to my young readers in full assembly, enjoying in the arbour I have before described the refreshing breezes, which succeeded to a very warm day, one delight-

ful evening in the month of June. Mrs. Danby frequently indulged her young people, by ordering such fruits as the season afforded to be served in this rural retreat. The children never thought their strawberries and cream had so delicious a flavour as when partaken of here: here too they frequently drank tea; and little George used to say, he would rather eat bread in the arbour than cake in the parlour.

The tea equipage was just removed, on the evening already mentioned, when the following conversation took place:

Fanny, "I believe, papa, you intend to read to us; for I saw you put a book into your pocket before you came out of the parlour."

Mr. D. "You are very right, my dear Fanny, in your conjecture; for it is my intention to do so, if agreeable to your mamma."

Mrs. D. "Nothing can be more so. Did you bring any work, Sophia?"

Sophia, "Yes, ma'am; I brought the shirt with me which I began to make for my brother William yesterday."

Mrs. D. "Very well, my dear; then you can supply both Fanny and me."

Fanny, "Pray, sister, be so good as to give me something to hem; for this morning I was sewing up a seam, and the thread broke so often that it quite tired my patience."

Mrs. D. "I will be so good as to give you a very warm day, one delight."

Mrs. D. "I am sorry, Fanny, to find that your patience was so easily overcome; and I believe there was less fault in the thread than in your management of it; for your sister and I were sewing the same linen this morning, and used the same thread also; yet I did not perceive any thing amiss with it, or hear your sister complain of its being bad; but now let us be silent, my dear; for we are preventing your papa from performing his promise."

Charles. "Pray, sir, what is the subject of the book you are going to read to us?"

Mr. D. "I lately made a purchase of Doctor Goldsmith's *Animated Nature*, and this is the first volume, the whole of which is taken up by a history of the earth."

Fanny. "Animated Nature! Oh dear! I'm afraid I shall not be able to understand it."

Mr. D. "I shall at present select such passages, my dear, as I deem quite suitable to your age and capacity; and, if you pay a proper attention, I have no doubt but you will fully comprehend what I am going to read to you; but if you want an explanation of any passage, or word, make no scruple of interrupting me."

Mrs. D. "George, my love, whenever you wish to play about, you may go into the garden; but remember you are not to trample on the beds, nor pluck the flowers."

George. "No, mamma; I will not."

Mr. Danby then proceeded to read several passages from Dr. Goldsmith's work, calculated to engage the future attention of his children to its interesting contents, and concluded with the following beautiful panegyric on the earth:

"It is this earth," says Pliny, "that, like a kind mother, receives us at our birth, and sustains us when born. It is this alone of all the elements around us that is never found an enemy to man."

"The waters deluge him with rains, oppress him with hail, and drown him with inundations. The air rushes in storms, and prepares the tempest, or lights up the volcano; but the earth, gentle and indulgent, ever subservient to the wants of man, spreads his walks with flowers and his table with plenty; returns with interest every good committed to her care; and though she produces the poison, she still supplies the antidote; though constantly teized more to furnish the luxuries of man than his necessities, yet even to the last she continues her kind indulgence, and when life is over she piously covers his remains in her bosom."

Here Mr. Danby closed his book, and the amusements of the evening were concluded by a pleasant walk in some of those delightful meadows in the vicinity of Rose Hill, which, at this season, were attired in their gayest livery.

For some days after this, the young people were occupied at their leisure hours in receiving and paying

paying visits, several little parties being formed with their companions in the neighbourhood, which, on every proper occasion, met with the ready concurrence of Mr. and Mrs. Danby, to whom nothing was a greater pleasure than promoting the happiness of their children: but notwithstanding these engagements, which used to be productive of so much pleasure, there was in the countenance of Miss Danby an air of dejection and languor which no amusement could dissipate: this was observed by the whole family, yet no one inquired the cause of such a change, it being easily accounted for. The fear of increasing her uneasiness deterred her friends from speaking upon the subject which occasioned it.

About a mile from the house of Mr. Danby lived a gentleman and lady of the name of Molineux, whose eldest daughter had for many years been the favourite companion of Sophia Danby: this young lady was on the point of quitting her native village, in order to be placed at a boarding-school near London, which, in all probability, would occasion a separation of the young friends (short intervals excepted) for the space of two or three years. This appeared a greater affliction to each than they had yet experienced.

On the morning of the day preceding that fixed upon for Miss Molineux's departure, Mrs. Danby thus addressed Sophia, as soon as Mr. Danby and the young gentlemen had quitted the breakfast parlour:

lour: "I believe, my dear, we must this evening take our leave of Maria Molineux; for her mamma told me that they had come to a determination of setting out on their intended journey to-morrow morning. I hope my dear Sophia will not think I do not sufficiently enter into the nature of her feelings on this occasion, or that I do not sincerely sympathize with her on the loss she is about to sustain, if I remind her, that though she will be separated from a friend so highly and so deservedly esteemed as Miss Molineux, yet she will be surrounded by those who are attached to her by the tenderest ties, and from whose society she has ever appeared to derive much happiness."

The tears which had for some time glistened in the eyes of Sophia, and which she had with some difficulty retained in their lucid orbs, now fell in a plentiful shower: her affectionate heart was assailed by a variety of emotions; and, running to her mamma, she fell on her knees, and hiding her face in her lap, gave vent to the sobs which audibly confessed the poignancy of her feelings. Mrs. Danby for a few moments sought not to restrain her tears, which soon relieved her oppressed heart from a part of the grief with which it was overloaded. When a little recovered she arose, and, kissing her mamma with the utmost expression of tenderness in her manner, said, "I hope, my dear mamma, you do not think me ungrateful; for indeed I love you and my papa, and my brothers and sister so dearly—

I cannot tell you how dearly; yet——” “I know what you would say, my love,” rejoined Mrs. Danby: “you wish to tell me, that although you feel for us all the tenderest, the most lively affection, yet you cannot forbear grieving at the thoughts of parting with a friend whose society you have occasionally, and even frequently enjoyed, almost from infancy. You also wish to convince me, that the friendship which you have conceived for this young lady does not, in the least, diminish that affection which you feel for those who have the first claim on your grateful love.”—“Dear mamma,” said Miss Danby, greatly encouraged by this address, “how you read my heart!”—“That I have often done, my dear Sophia,” replied her mother, “when, perhaps, you were not aware of my being engaged in such a study. I am happy to say, that I have always had reason to believe that that heart was ever ingenuous, friendly, and sincere. I thank God that I never yet discovered in the minds of my children the seeds of those dreadful passions which, without care and attention, are but too apt to insinuate themselves into the human frame. Be it the undeviating care of those who fulfil the important duties belonging to a preceptor, studiously to guard every avenue that might admit such baleful intruders, with whom peace and tranquillity were never known to dwell.

“But I was going to say a few words more to you, my love, respecting the departure of Miss Molineux.

I wish

I wish you to be as little discomposed as possible by this event. You must consider, Sophia, that this young lady is leaving her family and her friends for the purpose of finishing an education which has been so happily begun, and, to all appearance, so judiciously carried on to the present period. We may reasonably hope that she will return to you, fraught with useful knowledge and elegant accomplishments; and that her society will be productive of much advantage to you from such acquisitions. At the same time I trust you will be making those advances in the various branches of education that we judge suitable to your station, genius, and abilities, which your present acquirements lead us to expect; so that when Miss Molineux returns, I trust she will have every inducement to continue the friendship which has hitherto met with no interruption. Above all, my dear Sophia, I wish you to preserve that openness of heart and mind, that noble sincerity and candour, which has, no doubt, recommended you so strongly to your young friend, and which I know has contributed much to gain you the love of Mrs. Molineux, and render you, in her estimation, so desirable a companion for her daughter. I am well assured there is no young lady whom Mrs. Molineux sees at her house with greater pleasure than yourself. You are perhaps afraid, my love, that your friend will not retain for you that partial fondness which she has hitherto expressed, but may imagine herself

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to move in a higher sphere, and, on her return, may look down upon the little villager with a degree of conscious superiority. It is true, you are not likely to be placed in a situation which the world may think equally eligible with that of your friend. But, although you will not have such large sums of money expended on your education, you will be instructed by those who are infinitely more interested in your concerns; who, whilst they endeavour to store your mind with useful knowledge, and direct your attention to the acquisition of whatever they think conducive to your true interest, will enforce their precepts by uniting the kind and partial friend with the instructor. I am persuaded, Sophia, you would find no task so delightful, as that which a fond parent desired you to perform; nor would you think any gratification, on becoming mistress of that task, equal to that of giving pleasure to your best friends.”—“Dear mamma, how good you are,” replied Sophia; “surely I ought not to grieve for any loss while blessed with your company and protection, and that of my papa, and while I see you and my brothers and sisters all well.”—“That, my dear, would be confining to too narrow a compass the social affections with which you are endowed; and which, in a truly benevolent mind, display themselves in a general love for all mankind; but more particularly create in us an affectionate solicitude for those with whom we are accustomed to associate,

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and who are endeared to us by the virtues they possess. Imagine not therefore, my dear, that I wish to damp that pure and ardent affection you bear Maria Molineux; for I think the cultivation of a sincere, disinterested friendship, when excited by an amiable object, and under proper restrictions, is one of the noblest propensities of which our nature is capable. I would only guard you, my dear child, against giving way to those romantic notions which some young ladies entertain with respect to this subject; who think that every duty and every tie, how sacred soever, must give place to this one sentiment which occupies their mind. But I know I need not point out to my Sophia where her first and principal attention (her duty to her Creator excepted) ought to be paid. Her own heart dictates this in a more forcible manner than it is in my power to do. But come, my love, we will pursue this subject no farther: go and see for your brother George, and we will take a walk in the garden. Fanny, my dear, go up stairs for my hat and gloves, and bring down your own." Fanny, who had been a silent, but not an inattentive observer of what had passed between her mamma and sister, flew to obey these orders. On her return to the parlour, she met her sister and little George crossing the hall: Fanny ran up to her, and taking her hand, said, "Dear Sophia, do not cry, and I will love you better than ever I did, indeed I will."—"So will I too," said little George.

Miss Danby kissed them both, and assured them of her tenderest love.

A servant now came to tell Mrs. Danby, that Mrs. and Miss Molineux were in the parlour; upon which she hastened to receive her visitors, followed by Sophia, who, with an irresolute step, and a countenance that indicated a heart but ill at ease, entered the parlour, where Mrs. Molineux and her daughter were sitting. Miss Danby paid her compliments to the former in the best manner she was able; and, taking the hand of the latter, would have spoken, but her voice faltered; and, instead of expressing herself as she intended, she quitted her friend in silence, and retired to the window, where she hoped unobserved to indulge, for a few moments, those emotions which she found herself utterly unable to suppress. She was soon joined by her friend, whose feelings corresponded too well with those of Sophia not to produce a similar effect.

But this dutiful girl soon called to mind the conversation which she had had with her good mamma but a little before, and, summoning to her aid all the fortitude of which she was mistress, began to enumerate to her friend the advantages likely to result from a separation, which, though afflictive, would yet, no doubt, be attended with the happiest consequences. She pointed out the pleasure she should receive from her letters; and the opportunity she should have of improving herself in writing, by frequently employing
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her leisure hours in a manner that would be rendered so agreeable, by her having so dear a friend to address her letters to: but above all, she dwelt on the joy they would mutually experience, when so happy as to meet again. Mrs. Molineux, perceiving the countenances of the young people to brighten up, and that their usual cheerfulness was in some measure restored, prevailed on Mrs. Danby to permit Sophia to return with her and Miss Molineux, and spend the remaining part of the day at her house.

This was a most pleasing circumstance to the young people, who passed the time as pleasantly as the present situation of affairs would admit. In the evening, Mrs. Danby, accompanied by Fanny, took a walk to the Castle (the name of Mr. Molineux's habitation), in order to bring home her daughter.

After conversing for about a quarter of an hour with her friend, she arose to take leave; and, embracing Miss Molineux in the tenderest manner, expressed her sincere and fervent wishes for her welfare.

Poor Sophia would gladly have followed the example of her mother, but the farewell kiss which she gave her friend overcame all her fortitude: and, hiding her face with her handkerchief, and court-sying in silence to Mrs. Molineux, she hastily quitted the house. Mrs. Danby endeavoured by every means in her power to divert her daughter's attention from
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the subject which occupied her thoughts. But the event was too recent, and too interesting, to be easily effaced from her mind. What Sophia most earnestly wished for now was, to retire to her apartment, and there, without interruption or restraint, indulge the feelings of her friendly and affectionate heart. On her return home, she obtained her mother's permission to wish her a good night, and begged she would excuse her to her papa and brothers for not seeing them as usual before she retired to bed.

Sophia lay for some time ruminating on past scenes, and figuring to herself the vacuity she should experience when at liberty to engage in those scenes of amusement and gaiety which had been rendered so delightful by the society of Maria. But she was soon visited by that friend whose salutary influence buried in a sweet and total oblivion all her sorrows: and when Mrs. Danby entered her daughter's apartment, about ten o'clock, she had the satisfaction to find her in a profound sleep, although her cheek was still wet with the tears she had shed. In the morning, soon after Sophia awoke, she heard the clock strike six, which brought Maria to her view as travelling towards London, with a degree of expedition that would soon convey her many miles from the peaceful scenes where she had hitherto passed her early and her happy days. But she was resolved to banish from her mind, as much as possible, every gloomy idea; and, rising with precipitation,

tion, engaged in her usual employments with all the alacrity she could assume. After helping her sister to dress, as was her constant custom, they were preparing to take their morning walk, when Mrs. Danby entered the room. Sophia kissed her mother with more than usual tenderness, and thanked her for all her goodness; she then begged to know whether she could see her papa, being very desirous to pay her duty to him, and ask his forgiveness for retiring so abruptly the preceding evening. Mrs. Danby acquainted her that her papa was already on the lawn, on which they all repaired there immediately. After receiving a kiss of love and peace from her father, Sophia looked around for her brothers. She discovered Charles very busy in carrying materials to enrich the soil of his garden, attended by George, who was highly gratified with the idea of assisting his brother, by helping, as he thought, to wheel along the little vehicle which the children had received from their father for their own use. Mr. Danby had also presented them with various other utensils belonging to a gardener, by way of encouraging them to engage in the healthful employments of digging, planting, &c. of which they were extremely fond.

Not were the young ladies of the family excluded from partaking of amusements so conducive to health. Sophia and Fanny Danby were not afraid to encounter the chilling blasts of the north wind,

wind, when, in the bleak month of December, it whistled through the leafless branches of those trees which, in a more grateful season, had yielded their thick foliage to the genial gales that gently agitated their verdant and luxuriant boughs. Unaccustomed to those sensations which extreme delicacy of constitution and habits of indulgence excite, our young ladies felt no reluctance to trace and retrace the environs of Rose Hill, when Nature put on her most dreary and comfortless aspect. When her productions no longer wore the attractive and enlivening robe with which spring and summer adorn them; when not a leaf, not a flower appeared, to relieve the eye, but all was one uniform scene of dazzling whiteness, Miss Danby and her sister would tie on their close bonnets, and wrap themselves in their light but warm coats; and, thus equipped, soon obtained by exercise that warmth which brings along with it animation, gaiety of heart, and a happy flow of spirits so desirable to youth, and which parents, and those who have the care of children, ought studiously to promote. Mr. and Mrs. Danby had the happiness to find, that each of their young family had received from nature an excellent constitution: this blessing they took infinite pains to improve, by avoiding those habits of effeminacy so destructive to the youth of both sexes; and they had the felicity of seeing their endeavours crowned with the wished-for success. From such little excursions

as I have just described, our joyous party would return, with health glowing on their cheeks, and pleasure sparkling in their eyes, and recount to their delighted parents each particular of those sports and pastimes, by which their minds had been amused, and their health confirmed and improved.

But to return to our narrative. Sophia ran to her brothers, and, with that sweetness which accompanied all her actions, bade them good morning. Involuntarily she turned her eyes to the place where William's garden was situated, and beheld him standing in its centre, in an attitude expressive of deep thought and fixed attention. She hastened to the place where he stood, and twice wished him good morning, before he spoke to her. On looking up, he immediately said—(without answering her question of “How do you do, William?”)—“Oh! Sophia, I am glad you are there. I want your advice, for I cannot determine on what I should put in this bed; whether I should sow annuals, or plant shrubs, which my father has given me leave to take out of the shrubbery.” Sophia asked what the shrubs were, of which he spoke. “I will show you,” replied William, “if you will come with me to the shrubbery.” So away they ran, in order to consult farther of what was to be done in this matter. Although Sophia appeared to engage in the pursuits of the day with tolerable avidity, a day, being Saturday, more appropriated to amusement and exercise

ercise than any other in the week ; yet did her thoughts frequently recur to one subject, which was replete with anxiety : or, I believe I should more accurately describe the state of her mind, were I to say, that by this subject it was almost constantly occupied. When dinner was ended, and the young people sent out to play, Sophia took an opportunity of stealing to her own room, where, having the necessary utensils for writing in perfect readiness, she sat down to her pen, and expressed with it the sentiments of as artless, as innocent a mind, as ever Nature bestowed upon her most favourite child.

To this letter, which I shall soon insert for the perusal of my young readers, I refer them for the remaining particulars relative to this day ; and pass on to Monday morning, when, as soon as breakfast was ended, Charles and William attended their father in the library, to receive his instructions, and say their respective lessons. The former of these young gentlemen exhibited not that alacrity with which he usually obeyed such a summons. His steps, which were wont to be alert and active, were now slow and unassured ; and in his countenance, which was usually sprightly and animated, there was now something of fear and dejection. This alteration was easily accounted for. When his father began to examine him respecting the task he had appointed him to get, he found him extremely deficient. Mr. Danby, therefore, dismissed him with evident marks of

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of his displeasure, saying, "I am sorry, Charles, to find that, at your age, I am obliged to point out to you the infinite importance of those moments, upon which, were I to judge from the present instance, you appear to set so little value. Must I now remind you of the anxious solicitude with which your fond parents watch over your conduct? Must I now be under the necessity of repeating to you those lessons, which some time ago it was natural you should require? namely, that it is only from habits of industry in early youth, that respectability in mature life can be expected?" Charles felt the justice of his father's reproof, and retired from his presence with evident marks of humiliation and regret in his countenance.

Mr. Danby then turned his attention to William, diligent William! who, though he possessed less quickness of parts than his brother, made ample amends for this inequality by his indefatigable application. When William was sensible that his studies ought to occupy his time and attention, no amusement however alluring, no persuasions however strong, had the power to divert his thoughts from their proper channel. And I must do Charles the justice to acknowledge, that although his disposition was a little too volatile, yet such instances as the one just recited very seldom occurred. He had an ardent desire for knowledge; and the duty and affection which he felt for his parents were powerful incentives to diligence. These combined motives had enabled

enabled him to withstand many temptations, which a lively imagination had pictured as extremely attractive. What had recently triumphed over these worthy sentiments, was a strong inclination to put in execution some plans suggested to him by the gardener, for the improvement of the little spot which he had great pleasure in cultivating; and of which his father allowed him to consider himself the sole proprietor. Thus employed in his favourite occupation, time glided swiftly, and almost imperceptibly along; and when he recollected that he ought to have been differently engaged, it was too late to derive much benefit from the reflection.

William was far from triumphing over his brother on account of his disgraceful retreat; on the contrary, he would willingly, if in his power, have lessened his fault, by sharing with him the blame which it brought along with it. However, he had the satisfaction, before the dinner-hour arrived, of seeing Charles retrieve his credit, and obtain a full and free pardon from his father. In the evening, Mr. Danby proposed a walk to his two sons, which was most cheerfully complied with. As they drew near the habitation of Mr. Howard, a worthy man who lived in the neighbourhood of Rose Hill, Mr. Danby mentioned his design of calling to inquire after the health of his friend, as he could not help thinking he appeared less cheerful than usual at their last interview. On entering the parlour of Mr.

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Howard,

Howard, they found him sitting alone in a melancholy attitude, while in his countenance it was easy to perceive the traces of grief and concern. A gleam of pleasure, however, enlivened his features on the entrance of Mr. Danby. When the usual salutations were over, this gentleman inquired with more minuteness into the state of his health, alleging at the same time his reasons for such an inquiry. The good old gentleman shook his head, and, after a silence of a few moments, thus replied: "You, Mr. Danby, are the father, the happy father, of five children. I am persuaded that you are a stranger to those heart-rending pangs to which I am a prey. God grant you may ever remain so! Is there upon earth a more corroding evil, than that which arises from being father to an ungrateful, disobedient child? My present feelings tell me there is not."

While Mr. Howard was speaking, Mr. Danby glanced his eye toward his sons. In the face of William there appeared all that innocent and modest confidence which conscious rectitude and integrity inspire. But it was far otherwise with Charles: sensible that by a recent act of negligence he had given pain to one of the best of fathers, he felt in a degree all the horrors attendant upon actual guilt. Mr. Danby, with a mixture of pleasure and concern, beheld in the ingenuous countenance of his son what was passing in his mind. But these observations did not render him less attentive to the
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afflictions

afflictions of Mr. Howard, for whom he felt the most sincere and friendly concern. He urged every argument he could think of, in order to raise the drooping spirits of this disconsolate parent, alleging that his son was yet but a boy, and that he hoped there was no doubt but that time, the admonitions of his friends, and his own reflections, would produce a happy change in his temper and conduct. With regard to the particulars of the fault he had recently committed, Mr. Danby forbore to make any inquiry, as he wished not to do it while his sons were present. But he formed the resolution in his own mind of calling the next morning, that he might have an opportunity of talking over the matter more at large, and of offering every assistance in his power, and the best advice he was capable of giving, in regard to the measures which should be thought most advisable to be adopted with respect to this unhappy boy; who, in return for the most indulgent goodness of a fond parent, had planted in the heart of that parent a thousand daggers.

Mr. Howard, in the course of a few years, had lost a beloved wife and three promising children. On this son, therefore, the only surviving hope of his family, were all his ideas of worldly happiness placed. How exquisite, then, must be his sufferings, on seeing those hopes destroyed by ingratitude and disobedience, where he had every right to expect filial love, and the most dutiful and respectful behaviour! Mr. Danby,

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finding that the young gentleman was a prisoner up stairs, with some difficulty prevailed on his friend to return with him to Rose Hill, and pass the evening at his house. Charles and William followed the two gentlemen at some distance; but the latter tried in vain to engage his brother in conversation. Wholly occupied with the thoughts of the error he had committed, and concern for the misconduct of George Howard, he continued thoughtful and uneasy the whole of the evening; and, when the young people retired for the night, Charles felt not any inclination to follow the example of his brother, who no sooner betook himself to his pillow than he fell into a sweet and profound sleep. What was a very unusual circumstance with Charles, he heard the clock strike eleven before he felt the influence of that friend to whose salutary effects and regular visits he was so greatly indebted. Soon after six in the morning, Mr. Danby entered the apartment of his two eldest sons. Charles awoke at the sound of the well-known voice of his father, whose kind words and benevolent aspect prevented in a great measure the return of those gloomy thoughts, to which he had been subjected the preceding day.

When the boys were ready to leave their room, they followed their father into the garden, where each received his respective task, which was undertaken with the utmost pleasure and alacrity. Charles's was that of weeding a flower-bed, and William's

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the less skilful one of assisting his father in putting down sticks for the support of a crop of peas, the flourishing appearance of which promised a plentiful return for the care bestowed upon them. The mild rays of the sun, the refreshing breeze which whispered among the branches, and the beautiful face of Nature, all conspired to fill the minds of our young labourers with the most agreeable sensations. However, Charles did not feel quite satisfied, till he had again besought his father's forgiveness, and again renewed his promises of being more attentive in future.

Mr. Danby endeavoured, by the kindest expressions, to efface from the mind of his son every uneasy reflection, and harmony and peace were again restored to his breast. We will now revert to the letter of Miss Danby, before spoken of, which was as follows:

To Miss MOLINEUX.

"Rose Hill, July 3.

"MY DEAREST MARIA,

"AFTER trying in vain to divert myself with what used to afford me so much pleasure, I now sit down to converse with you in the only way which is at present in my power. You cannot think what a relief this is to me.

"I stole from my brothers and Fanny, who are in the play-room, and, running to my closet, I took up

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my pen, and spreading the paper before me, in a moment I would have begun my present employment; but a sudden burst of tears prevented me. However, this was but a momentary interruption, for I soon regained my composure; and now I feel as if I could write all day, though we only parted last night. I am sure I shall never want for subject; and I know very well by my own heart that you will be satisfied with what I write, because the things which I shall write about will chiefly relate to those you love best in the whole world; for you know I shall have a deal to say about your papa and mamma, and Frank and Eliza, and dear little Susanna. And then I know you love my papa and mamma very dearly, and my brothers, and Fanny.

“I must tell you exactly how I spent this day. I was sadly afraid I should not say my poem well; however, I went on better than I expected till I had about half finished, when all at once, as it were, I recollected that I said it to you last Wednesday in the arbour. I cannot describe to you how I felt on calling to mind this little circumstance; but I seemed as if I could not utter another word, and I made a full stop. William knew part of the poem, and put me in, as he thought, concluding that I had forgotten the next line; I then made one great effort; and, pretending to clear my voice, had the good fortune to succeed, and went on to the end pretty well.

“After

"After the reciting was over, my mamma said she would walk with us on the lawn. When we had taken a few turns, Fanny said, 'This is a pleasant day, and not too warm; don't you think it would be agreeable to take a dance, mamma? But what will you do for your partner, Charles? I believe you must take up with little George, now Miss Molineux is gone.' Charles blushed as red as scarlet; and though he pretended to sing, I saw him strive to conceal a tear which fell on his cheek. I was obliged to take out my handkerchief too. Just then, James came to tell us that dinner was ready.

"I would have given any thing to have avoided sitting at table; but I had no excuse to make for being absent, that I thought would be satisfactory. I was therefore obliged to manage as well as I could. Mamma was so good as to help me but to a little; yet I contrived to seem to eat, though I had some on my plate when my brothers had done. I glanced my eye towards James, who seemed as if he understood me, for he instantly took away my plate. 'How good that is!' said I to myself: and I determined to give him a shilling, as soon as I received my pocket-money.

"But here comes Fanny, to know what I am doing. She says that they are dull without me; that Charles is sitting still; and that William is not disposed to play, because there is no one to join him

but herself and little George. I tell Fanny I will attend her directly; for, though I would rather write to you, my dear Maria, at present, than play at any thing, yet I should think I was ungrateful, to requite the love of my brothers and sister with neglecting to do what they wish.

“Adieu! dear Maria. I hope I shall soon have an opportunity of resuming my pen.”

In Continuation.

“I HAD but just entered the play-room with Fanny, my dear Maria, when my mamma came in, and asked if we should like to take a walk to farmer Williams’s, for that she and my papa were ready to accompany us. No objection was made to this proposal, you may be sure, but all complied with great readiness. How good is my mamma! for I’m sure she thought I appeared dull, and that the walk would do me good. I took with me a little present, which I had had for some time in my trunk, and which I designed for Jenny Williams; and when I gave it to her she seemed so grateful, and so pleased, that I felt quite sorry it was not better.

“When we were at tea, Mrs. Williams said, “I wish you had brought Miss Molineux with you, Miss Sophia, for I know you are always happy when together; and I’m sure I should have been very glad to have seen her, she is so pretty behaved
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a young lady.' My mamma was good enough to answer for me, and immediately changed the subject.

"When tea was over, my papa went with Mr. Williams to look over his grounds, and my mamma walked in the garden with Mrs. Williams, while we children went with Jenny and Sally to feed the poultry; after which we had some fine play in the barn.

"When we returned, Mrs. Williams desired I would permit Jenny to read to me, that I might be a judge of the improvement she had made since I last heard her a lesson. I said I was afraid I was not capable of giving my opinion; and, from the fear of appearing vain of my learning, I omitted correcting her for some mistakes which she made in the beginning. But my mamma spoke to me about it, and said, that as Mrs. Williams had desired me to attend to Jenny's reading, I might with the greatest propriety put her right when I saw occasion. The poor little girl read but indifferently; which put me in mind of the great advantages we enjoy, Maria. If we had had parents no better capable of instructing us than Mr. and Mrs. Williams, I suppose we should have known no more, in proportion to our ages, than Jenny does; for she does not seem to want for capacity. What a great blessing it is, to have parents who are both able and willing to attend to the improvement of their children!

"Mrs. Williams would not suffer us to take our

leave, till we had partaken of a fine dish of fruit, which she had given orders to have gathered for us. It was almost nine o'clock when we got home, and poor George was quite tired; and, indeed, we were all ready for bed. Your brother Frank and Eliza were to accompany us home from church: as mamma wished to see Susanna, however, we went first to the Castle. But I should have told you when I began this part of my letter, that it is now Monday morning.

"You can't think how oddly I felt at the thoughts of going to your house, though I was in some measure prepared by the vacancies in your pew. But I thought every thing about the house appeared so melancholy, that I was very glad when mamma got up to go; for though I diverted myself with Susanna, yet I could not drive away mournful thoughts. I am sure I need not tell my dear Maria that I am very impatient till Thursday comes. I hope nothing will prevent your papa and mamma from being at home on that day, as they intended. Yet I ought not perhaps to wish so; because, no doubt, their staying a little longer in London would be a great pleasure to you. So I will comfort myself with this thought, if they should not come.

"We all went to church together in the afternoon, and Mr. Oswald came and drank tea with us; after which, we children read each a chapter in the Bible. Mr. Oswald says he is now got quite well,
and

and desires he may assist my father as usual in the education of Charles and William. So they are to go three days in every week to him, as they did before his illness. He would have preached yesterday, if my father had not persuaded him to wait till next Sunday

"Mrs. Masters and the two young ladies are to dine with us to-morrow, and Frank and Eliza are to come and meet them.

"And now, dear Maria, I must take my leave; for mamma says she would have me send away this letter by to-day's post, as you will all be glad to hear good news from the Castle. I shall first ask her if she will have the goodness to look over the trifle I have written. We all unite in the most affectionate remembrance and best wishes: Mr. Oswald, too, desired me to present his kind respects.

"Believe me, dearest Maria, ever

"Your most affectionate friend,

"SOPHIA DANBY."

On the day after this letter was written, Mrs. Masters and her daughters, with Master Molineux and Miss Eliza, met at Rose Hill, according to promise. Soon after dinner was concluded, the young people had liberty given them to engage in whatever diversion was most agreeable to their inclinations. The lawn was the place they resorted to; where having wearied themselves with play, they repaired to

the shrubbery, in order to sit and rest : having taken possession of a seat which was sheltered from the rays of the sun, the following conversation took place.

Master M. " Did you hear, Charles, how Falkland was served, and how he served farmer Jones and Sally ?"

Master D. " No : how was it ?"

Master M. " Why, Ned had a mind for a frolic ; and knowing that farmer Jones was going to see a relation, last Saturday, that lives twelve miles off, and that he was to take Sally behind him, he determined to frighten them as they came home. The farmer's road lay through Spring Wood, which, you know, is very lonesome, and Ned thought they would be pretty late coming home ; so he contrived to ride that way in the dusk of the evening, with a pistol and a black crape in his pocket."

Miss Mas. " Oh frightful ! But sure it was not charged ?"

Master M. " No, no, it was not charged."

Miss Mas. " Nay, I should not have wondered if it had been ; for he is the most daring boy I ever knew, or ever heard of."

Master M. " And so, when he had got about a quarter of a mile into the wood, he tied the crape over his face, and took his pistol in his hand."

Miss D. " Upon my word ! a formidable figure, indeed."

Master

Master D. "I dare say he was; for though he is but a year older than I am, I don't think he wants many inches of being as tall as my father: and then his voice is very rough."

Master M. "And so he rode slowly on for a while, and, just as he got to the second turning, he saw somebody coming at the rate of a brisk trot, which he soon discovered to be the farmer and his daughter. Ned put his horse into a gallop, and was up with them in a twinkling. He then presented his pistol, and demanded the farmer's money in the most peremptory manner. Sally shrieked violently; and, without knowing what she was about, jumped off the horse; by which means she sprained her ankle. But that she did not mind; for, falling on her knees, she began to beg he would spare their lives, and offered him all the money she had in her pocket. In the mean time, the farmer drew out his purse, which contained half a guinea and five shillings, and gave it to Ned: for the surprise, together with Sally's fright, threw him into such confusion, that he never once thought at the time of any deceit being practised upon him. Ned pocketed the farmer's money, and begged them not to be alarmed, for that he intended them no farther injury. In saying this he was very near betraying himself; for he could not refrain from laughing, to see the terror of Sally, and the astonishment of her father. However, he rode off with his booty unsuspected. You may

may easily guess what a consternation the family were in on being told what had happened. Poor Sally could scarcely sit on horseback, fancying every noise she heard was the highwayman coming to murder them.

“The next morning Mr. Jones went to the miller’s, who, you know, lives just at the outskirts of the wood. ‘Well, neighbour,’ says the miller, ‘and so you were robbed last night, I find. But I believe you got your money again though.’—‘My money quotha! a very likely story, truly,’ replied the farmer; ‘people seldom run the risk of having a halter tied about their necks for taking away money, for the sake of giving it back again. No, no; the villain secured my money, I’ll warrant.’—‘Well,’ said the miller, ‘I’ll venture a tankard upon it, that before three days are over your purse will be given back to you; for what do you think of Squire Falkland’s son being the highwayman?’ The farmer was very unwilling to think that he could have been so imposed upon by a boy; and I imagine he would rather have lost his money, than have run the hazard of being laughed at by his neighbours for parting with it so easily. But, sure enough, the miller was right; for Mr. Jones was no sooner at home, than his wife put his purse and its contents into his hands, which she said was brought by a strange boy, who, as soon as he had given it to her, ran off. But it was some time before
Mrs.

Mrs. Jones knew what she had got ; for it was carefully wrapt up in several different papers, each of which was tied with a fast knot, so that the boy had time to be out of sight before the parcel was completely opened.

“ But I should have told you how the miller came to be so well acquainted with this affair ; which happened thus :—Just as Ned was putting on his black crape, and practising how he should present his pistol, one of the men that works at the mill passed by in the narrow path, and was a witness of the whole transaction. So, as soon as Mr. Jones’s sons came to know this, they vowed vengeance against Ned, for you know they are spirited lads. They accordingly laid their plan ; and finding out last night that Ned was gone to Mr. Crosbie’s, they employed two men to conceal themselves behind a hedge, just by the horsepond. So, as Ned was returning, between nine and ten o’clock, he found himself seized upon by two stout fellows at the place I have mentioned. ‘ Oh ! oh ! ’ said they, ‘ my young Squire Somers, we’ve caught you, have we ! a very pretty gentleman, truly, to play your pranks upon honest people ! ’—‘ You are mistaken, my good fellows,’ said Ned ; ‘ my name is Falkland, and my father lives at that large brick house just by there ; where, if you will accompany me, I will give you each a tankard of the best ale you have tasted since Christmas.’—‘ No, no, young gentleman, it won’t do ;

no

no tricks upon travellers, if you please. What! and so you want to impose yourself upon us for that well-behaved young gentleman, Master Falkland? But we know better things, I assure you. He would scorn to frighten honest people out of their senses. But come, my young master, we'll cool your courage, I'll warrant you, and teach you how to take the name of your betters.' It was in vain that Ned made use of every argument he could think of, in order to soften these men, and prevail upon them to lay aside their intention. They had too much zeal for the cause in which they were engaged, and too much respect for the character of their good friend, Master Falkland, not to carry their design into execution. So, in spite of all remonstrances, they gave their prisoner a complete ducking in the pond; then placing him carefully upon his feet, on dry ground, ran off in all haste, leaving poor Ned in a very piteous plight, to make the best of his way home, or act as he should think proper."

Miss Mas. "Well! I am very glad he has met with his deserts, for I really believe there never was so mischievous a boy. For my part I can't bear him."

Miss D. "If he has not taken cold I can't say I am sorry for what has happened. It was really a dangerous joke; for poor Sally Jones might have been frightened into fits by it."

Miss E. Mas. "Dear Miss Danby! and should you

you really be sorry that so shocking a creature had taken cold? In my opinion, the punishment would be too mild for him."

Master M. "I'm afraid, ladies, that Ned has been putting some of his tricks upon you, you are both so prejudiced against him."

Miss Mas. "Why indeed he was very rude some weeks ago, when my sister and I were going to dine at Mr. Crosbie's, where there was to be a great deal of company. My mamma was not very well, and did not go, and, as the weather was fine, she did not send the carriage with us. Just as we got to the bridge Master Falkland overtook us, and was very officious in handing us over some little pools of water which had been occasioned by the rain that had fallen a day or two before. As I was stepping across he put his foot upon a loose stone, and splashed my beautiful muslin frock in such a manner that we were obliged to return home, where I changed my dress. This made us so late, and vexed me so much, that I had no pleasure in my visit."

Miss D. "But why should you think he intended to serve you so, Belinda? I should suppose it was quite an accident."

Miss Mas. "No; I am sure it was not; for while he was making a great many apologies for what he had done, it was easy to see by his countenance that it gave him the greatest satisfaction."

Miss

Miss F. D. "Well! I know what I should have done if he had served me so: I should only have laughed at it, and, instead of going home to change my frock, should have gone just as I was, and have made my apology to Mrs. Crosbie, and Mrs. Crosbie would have made it to the company, and so there would have been nothing in it; and Master Falkland would have lost his joke."

Miss Mas. "Upon my word, Miss Fanny, you have settled the affair much to your satisfaction; but, in my opinion, the behaviour of such rude vulgar boys ought to be resented; at least, I know it shall never meet with encouragement from me."

Miss D. "I blame Master Falkland in many things which he has done, and think he ought to be reprimanded for them; however, I cannot say that I think he is a vulgar boy; for I have seen him behave in such an obliging manner as to gain the favour of every one present: and I have heard my mamma say, that she thought he would have the manners and behaviour of a gentleman."

Miss E. Mas. "He must alter greatly before I shall think so; and I wonder, Miss Danby, how it happens that he is such a favourite with you, whatever Miss Fanny might think of him."

Miss F. D. "I can tell you, Miss Emily, why he is a little bit of a favourite with my sister: it is because he is very good natured, and is very sorry for poor people. And I should think you cannot have

have forgotten how generous he was to the little boy we met the day that you two ladies, with Sophia, Charles, me, and himself, were walking towards the village. Don't you remember how sadly the poor little boy cried? And when we asked him what the matter was, he said he was very hungry, and had nothing to eat. So we all began to search our pockets. Sophia had left her money at home; and I had laid out my last three-pence in buying feeds for the birds. Charles had not a single halfpenny; and you, Miss Emily, had nothing less than sixpence, any more than your sister. Master Falkland had just five shillings, with which he was to buy a book in the morning that he had set his mind upon. And so, as you ladies thought sixpence was too much to give him, we passed on, and the poor little boy cried most bitterly: however, we had not gone many yards before this young gentleman that you dislike so much, turned back, and gave the little fellow a shilling. Now I would ask any one, if that was not very good natured?"

Just as Fanny had concluded her anecdote, Mr. and Mrs. Danby, with Mrs. Masters, approached the place where they were sitting. "I am afraid," said Mrs. Danby, "you have engrossed too much of the conversation, Fanny; for I think I heard no voice but yours as we came down the walk."

"No, indeed, mamma," replied Miss Danby, "Fanny has not been talking much, only just now

was

was telling us something that happened one evening when we were taking a walk."—"I am glad of it, my dear," said Mrs. Danby; then smiling, she added, "I am happy too to say, that while Fanny has a sister, I believe she will never want an advocate." Fanny said nothing; but a glance of her sprightly eyes, which she directed towards her mamma and sister, was expressive of her grateful assent to the observation of her mother.

We will now pass over a few days in silence, and advert to the one succeeding that on which Mr. and Mrs. Molineux arrived at the Castle. No sooner was breakfast over than Mrs. Danby proposed to her daughters taking a walk to the Castle. Every look and movement of Sophia testified her joy and impatience: she flew up stairs for her hat and gloves, and having brought those of her mamma, she thought every minute an hour till they commenced their walk. They had heard the preceding evening, that Mr. and Mrs. Molineux were safely arrived at their own house, and that they had left Miss Molineux in perfect health. For further particulars on this subject we will have recourse to the letter which, on Friday evening, Sophia addressed to her friend, and which was as follows:

To Miss MOLINEUX.

"Rose Hill, July 9th.

"I THIS morning had the happiness to receive my dear Maria's most kind and welcome letter. You were very good indeed, my dear friend, to write so soon. I am sure I should have made every allowance for your omitting it till after your papa and mamma had left you.

"As soon as I had finished reading your letter, which made me shed tears of pleasure, I gave it to your mamma, and I watched her countenance while she was reading it. It was easy to see the marks of joy and satisfaction in her looks, while she perused the page written by the hand of her Maria. I should be quite angry with myself, if I could feel any uneasiness in acknowledging the superiority of your talents.

"On the contrary, I am delighted to think, that for my most intimate friend I have one who shows so much good sense. Neither does this discourage me from writing, because I know that what my letters want in sense and cleverness, is made up by love and affection. Oh! Maria; I never knew till now that I have lost you, how much I loved you."

"My mamma, and Fanny, and I, were at the
Castle

Castle this morning before breakfast was quite over; and when the servant was rung for to take away the china, your little Juliet ran after him into the room, instantly came frisking up to me, and jumped into my lap: she then looked round in a wistful kind of way and made a complaining sort of noise. 'Oh, mamma,' said your brother, 'look at Juliet. She thinks because Miss Danby is here, that Maria must be here also.' Do you think I did not sympathize with Juliet, who, after looking in vain for her mistress, ran into a corner, and lay there in silence, with all the air of a person greatly disappointed? I'm sure your mamma was affected by this little circumstance, though she endeavoured to pass it off. I believe too your papa took a great deal of notice of it; for I observed that he caressed Juliet more than usual. We stayed near two hours with your mamma; and when we returned home, Fanny and I attended my brothers into the library to hear some geography.

"It is fixed for your brother to return to school about the middle of next week. I wonder whether my papa and mamma intend I should ever go to school; but, from what my mamma said a few days ago, I fancy not. I never ventured to ask such a question, because it might look as if I were dissatisfied with my present instructors, and that would be a thought which I should not know how to bear; for

for I am sure if I were not the most grateful of pupils, I should not deserve such preceptors.

“ Though I am but a child, and not capable of judging as others are who are older, yet I can make a comparison between the manner in which you and I have been educated, and that in which the Miss Masters’s have been brought up: and after making the comparison, I am sure I can be at no loss what conclusions to draw. Mrs. Masters, I dare say, is as fond of her daughters as your mamma and mine are of theirs. It is only for want of knowing better that she does not instruct them in a more proper manner. I know they are taught to think, that, when they go into company, a dress which is exactly in the fashion, and a manner which shows their accomplishments to the greatest advantage, are what call for their chief notice. We have been told, that a genteel behaviour is what it is requisite to possess, and our dress has always been considered as of some importance. But my mamma has often told me, that the first object to be attended to is the proper regulation of the heart; that I must carefully cherish a wish to oblige those with whom I converse; that even if I do not think them worthy of my esteem, I must avoid treating them with incivility, and should be very careful how I form a rash judgment of their disposition and conduct. Now I know that nothing pleases the Miss Masters’s more than to show their finery and
their

their accomplishments to those they are in company with, and to triumph over such as they think beneath them.

“I remember I was ready to cry one day when I was visiting at Mrs. Masters’s, and met Henrietta Walker there, whose mother you know can only afford to have her taught plain reading, and sewing, and writing, and casting accounts. Poor Henrietta, after being for some time a silent spectator of all the fine things which Miss Masters showed her, and after hearing her sing some Italian airs and French songs, said with a dejected air, ‘What a fine thing it is to be rich!’—‘To be sure,’ replied Emily Masters, ‘it is a very fine thing; but those who are poor must learn to be content without such advantages as the rich possess.’ I was quite angry with her for mortifying the poor little girl thus; and I was very near telling her, that if she behaved in that manner, I would not come to see her again: however, I thought it was better to speak to Henrietta; so I said, ‘Never set your heart upon riches, my dear; for I assure you my papa and mamma have often told me, that it is better to be good than to be rich, a hundred times: and I declare if I were to grow proud or ill-natured by being rich, I had rather be poor a great deal. There is nobody in the neighbourhood more beloved than your mamma, I believe, Henrietta, though she does not keep a coach, nor live in a fine house. I’m sure I have

have heard Mr. Oswald say, that he believes her to be one of the best of women; and then you know she must be happy; and if you do as she directs you, there is no doubt but you will be happy too.'

"This speech had the desired effect on the dear little girl, whose countenance immediately brightened up; for the just praises which I bestowed on her mother delighted her affectionate heart. Emily Masters became silent and reserved, and did not recover her usual spirits during the remainder of the evening: but I was not at all sorry for that.

"I remember some weeks ago being very much struck with a conversation that passed at Mrs. Masters's, where my mamma, and Fanny, and I, called one Sunday morning after coming from church. I will endeavour to recollect it as well as I can, and write down the particulars.

Mrs. D. "I was sorry to see so small a congregation to-day; for I think I never heard our excellent curate give us a better sermon.'

Mrs. M. "I think it was a very good sermon; yet it seemed, I thought, rather too long.'

Miss M. "I was quite surprised to see so few genteel people at church; I know, had I suspected it to be the case, I should not have desired my mamma's leave to put on my elegant new bonnet that came from the milliner's last week. But I was quite entertained with observing farmer Wilson's daughter:

ters : 'tis really diverting to see the awkward attempts of such girls to imitate the dress of people of fashion.'

F. D. " ' Really ! well, that is very odd. I never before heard of any one going to church to be diverted, or to show their fine clothes. I always thought that it was to learn to be good, and to say their prayers.'

Mrs. M. " ' Certainly, my dear ! that ought to be the chief motive to be sure.'

Miss M. " ' Yes, I suppose it ought ; but then you know it is not every one that has the same occasion to be instructed. I have heard Mr. Fanshaw say, that Sunday is the poor people's day for receiving instruction : but to be sure the rich ought to go to church to set them a good example.'

Mrs. M. " ' You are very right, my dear, in regard to what Mr. Fanshaw asserted ; and he has certainly reason on his side for what he advances ; not but that the most learned may profit from a good discourse ; and that the act of engaging in public worship is likely to be attended with a good effect, I don't doubt ; but certainly it is the lower sort of people that stand in most need of it.'

" (The reply which my mamma made to this speech pleased me so much, that when we got home I desired she would write down what she had said ; and I now copy it for your perusal.)

Mrs. D. " ' That is a point to which I cannot yield my assent, my dear Mrs. Masters. Of him

to

to whom much is given, will much be required. There are many duties belonging to those who have received liberally from the hand of God, which they who are placed in an obscure station, and whose understandings are limited and confined, know nothing about, because it is wholly out of their power to practise them. To dispense knowledge to the ignorant, to give to Religion those graces which are her native right, by practising the duties she enjoins in the most extensive manner, is what is required of those who are entrusted with many talents. What a delightful employment may those engage in who are possessed of an enlightened mind, an affluent fortune, and a humane heart! But I am sorry to say, that melancholy experience teaches us how little utility is frequently derived, even to the possessor, as well as to society, from the liberal distributions of a kind Providence: surely then, my dear friend, we have need of every excitement to the practice of those duties which God and our fellow-creatures have an undoubted right to expect from us. I regard a regular attendance on public worship as an act which the true Christian ought to consider as indispensable; but at the same time I must observe, that unless we perform this duty with a devout frame of mind, a frame of mind open to conviction and desirous of instruction, it can avail us nothing. If, while we engage in the solemn duties of religion, our hearts are not made better by its

divine influence, and our lives not more conformable to its sacred laws, it were better for us never to have enjoyed the privileges we possess; it were better for us that we had lived in an age and country unenlightened by the divine truths which the Gospel affords, and which, if we pay a proper attention to them, will lead us by a safe and secure path to those blissful regions where the good and the virtuous will be made happy for ever. I would also remind you, that when we have done all, and studiously performed every duty we are enjoined to practise, we are but *unprofitable servants.*"

"Mrs. Masters could not but acknowledge that what my mother had said was strictly true; and, as she appeared thoughtful, my mamma judged it best to take her leave, that the subject she had been speaking upon might not be banished from her mind, by discoursing upon any other.

"I will now, my dear Maria, conclude this letter, as it is to be sent to your mamma to be enclosed in her frank, which is to go by this evening's post. My papa and my mamma, my brothers and Fanny, all unite in kindest love with

Your most affectionate

"SOPHIA DANBY."

When Sophia had finished her letter she took it to her mother, to ask if she would have the goodness to look over what she had written. Mrs. Danby

was much pleased with the offer; saying, that she doubted not but she should be highly gratified with the perusal. Having finished the letter, she turned to Sophia, with a more serious air than she usually assumed, telling her, that although she found much to approve, yet there were some passages which she deemed reprehensible. "Do you recollect, my dear," continued Mrs. Danby, "the striking and comprehensive words made use of by our Saviour, when he reproves those who are ready to discern faults in others, but who are blind to their own? 'Why beholdest thou the mote in thy brother's eye, yet considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye.' Now, my dear Sophia, I think that, in a small degree, you have merited the application of this censure. I will not pretend to say, how just your criticism may be on the manners and tempers of the Miss Masters's, but I would advise you to adopt the maxim which you say has been pointed out to you, I mean that of being very careful how you form a judgment of the conduct and disposition of others. Read your letter again; and I am convinced you will view this matter in the same light that I do."

Sophia, quite abashed, took the letter, with an air of deep humility, from her mother; and having read it, said, "Oh! mamma, how could I be so unthinking and so censorious! but I will immediately destroy this letter, and write another as soon

as I have time.”—“By no means, my dear,” replied Mrs. Danby; “your being sensible of your error is a sufficient atonement; and, by adding a postscript expressive of your present sentiments, such a confession may be of use to your friend: whereas, if you had not committed the fault which gave rise to it, the opportunity would not have occurred of pointing out, in so striking a manner, the duty of forbearance and moderation, when we sit in judgment on the conduct of others.” Sophia thanked her mamma for the good advice she had given her, and hastened to express her regret for the want of candour she had shown.

In the evening, as Mrs. Danby and her daughters were returning, rather later than usual, from a pretty long walk, and had just entered the field leading immediately to the shrubbery, Sophia perceived a little boy running very fast towards them, and stopped to observe him. The child every now and then looked back, as if apprehensive of being pursued.

Mrs. Danby, at the request of the young ladies, waited until the child came up with them; on his approach, they perceived him to be quite overcome with heat and fatigue: his appearance did not bespeak him more than five or six years of age; and being alone, Mrs. Danby felt herself interested for so young a traveller, and thus accosted him—

Mrs.

Mrs. D. "Pray, my little fellow, where are you going so fast? you seem to be out of breath."

Boy. "I don't know where I am going."

Mrs. D. "But why are you alone? Do you live near this place?"

Boy. "No: I don't live any where."

Mrs. D. "It is a sad thing indeed, to have no home. Then I fear you have not a mother, nor any friend to take care of you."

Boy. "Yes, I have a mother; but I don't like her: I left her at a house a great way off, and I won't go to her any more."

Mrs. D. "I am surprised at that. I fear you have been a naughty boy, and because you made your mother angry with you, you have run away from her, that you may not be punished again when you deserve to suffer. But you will punish yourself, more than your mother would have punished you."

Boy. "No, but I won't: for I shan't be beat now, and she was always beating me."

Mrs. D. "What did she beat you for?"

Boy. "Sometimes for crying because I had nothing to eat; and sometimes for not crying enough when she was begging for me; and for not walking fast enough when I was tired."

Fanny. "Ah! poor little boy, what a bad mother you have! Are you hungry now?"

Boy. "Yes, very hungry, and sadly tired: for I have

have run a great way, and I have had only one bit of bread to-day, and that was but a little bit."

Sophia. "Poor fellow! Mamma, he certainly speaks truth; his very looks tell me he does."

Mrs. D. "I am inclined to think he does; my love; for, as you say, his looks are in his favour: I never saw a more innocent face. And where do you intend to sleep to-night, my little boy?"

Boy. "I thought I could creep into a stable, or some such place, at this fine house we are coming to, at the top of the hill."

Mrs. D. "What is your name?"

Boy. "They call me Dickey; that's all."

Sophia. "Do, dear mamma, let us take him home, and give him something to eat, and provide him a comfortable place to sleep in. I don't think I could sleep myself if I did not know he was taken care of."

Fanny. "Nor I, indeed, mamma: or, if I did sleep, I dare say I should dream all night long of his meeting with some accident."

Mrs. Danby's feelings accorded too well with those of her daughters, not to afford protection, for the night at least, to this unfortunate little stranger. Accordingly, they proceeded together towards the house; when Mrs. Danby gave orders to have Dickey washed, and supplied with a good supper of bread and milk, after which he was conducted to a bed, composed of clean straw, where he enjoyed a
most

most comfortable sleep of many hours duration; for, when the family awoke, Dickey was still under the influence of this salutary friend. After giving such directions as Mrs. Danby thought proper concerning him, she went out to walk with her young people; for the weather was at this time so extremely warm, as to preclude any extraordinary exercise, except when the rays of the sun had abated their fervour, or before they had attained their full vigour.

On their return, their inquiries respecting the young stranger were superseded by his appearance in the hall, when Charles opened the front door. But so metamorphosed was Dickey, that his person was not immediately recognised by his benefactors. The servant to whom he was given in charge, had caused him to undergo a thorough cleansing; his hair was cut and combed; and, being a slender child, he was attired in a cast-off suit of George Danby's. His appearance created much admiration and surprise; for Dickey was graced by nature with an intelligent countenance, a bloom that poverty and unkind treatment had not effaced, and a look of such artless innocence, as could not fail of pleading strongly in his favour. These advantages certainly produced an effect the preceding evening, though obscured by dirt and rags, heat and fatigue. Mr. and Mrs. Danby surveyed him with sentiments of the warmest pity; and, while they rejoiced in this

opportunity of contributing to his present comfort; looked forward with much real concern to his future destiny, which appeared so forlorn and friendless. He was asked many questions, which it was hoped would lead to some further discoveries respecting his mother; but what could be gathered from his answers amounted to nothing more than what had been already learned.

After breakfast, Fanny took one of George's books, to try the extent of Dickey's learning; but she soon found that he did not know one letter from another. She therefore immediately, and with much alacrity, undertook to teach him; and the readiness with which he received instruction showed him to be a very docile pupil. The first lesson being finished, Fanny put the following questions to her little scholar:

Fanny. "You never before were in so pretty a room as this, I dare say, Dickey; don't you think those glasses are very handsome? and look at the pictures: how do you like the pictures, Dickey?"

Dickey. (*Pausing, and looking round the room.*) "I think them very pretty: but I believe I have seen some as pretty as these are, for all that."

Fanny. "Where did you see them, Dickey?"

Dickey. "In my mamma's house: for when I lived with my mamma I used to be in rooms very much like this."

Mrs. D. "How could that be, my dear, when
you

you told me that your mamma was a poor beggar, who wandered about the country?"

Dickey. "Yes, and so she is; but I mean my mamma, not my naughty mammy."

Mrs. D. "And are not your mamma and your mammy both the same?"

Dickey. "No; not a bit alike. My mamma was more like you; and used to wear the same sort of white stuff in her hair that you do. But my mammy is all over rags."

Mrs. D. "You surprise me very much, Dickey, to hear you say this: but are you sure that what you tell me is true?"

Dickey. "O, very sure! for I know she used to kiss me a great deal, and give me good things, and tell me she loved me dearly. But nobody ever kissed me when I lived with my mammy, nor gave me good things."

Mrs. D. "But why did you leave your mamma, who was so kind to you? Where does she live?"

Dickey. "I don't know where she lives, for I never heard any thing about her since my mammy fetched me away."

Mrs. D. "And what was the reason of your mammy fetching you away?"

Dickey. "I don't know any thing about that."

Mrs. D. "But I hope you can tell me the name of your mamma. You must try to recollect it, for I wish very much to know."

Dickey. "No: I don't know of any name that she had, but Mamma."

Mrs. D. "Can you tell me whether you had a papa also?"

Dickey. "O yes! that I had, I'm sure."

Mrs. D. "Then you can tell me his name, I hope."

Dickey. "No; I can't tell you any more than that I called him Papa; that's all."

Mrs. Danby was exceedingly struck with this conversation, which gave rise to conjectures that she had not before entertained; and she immediately went in search of Mr. Danby, that she might communicate her suspicions of this poor child having been conveyed away from his parents by the woman from whose cruelty he had fled.

Mr. Danby could not but acknowledge, that he thought this opinion might be formed with much apparent probability; and, accompanying Mrs. Danby to the room where she had left the child, they tried every possible means of obtaining from this friendless wanderer further information; but in this they were not so fortunate as to succeed: the knowledge of his misfortunes was too limited, to enable his friends to redress his wrongs in the manner they could wish. Their kindness, however, was such, as completed the present happiness of Dickey. Delighted with his associate, George Dan-

by,

by, and with every thing around him, it admitted not of increase.

In the afternoon, Mrs. Danby being dressed in a white muslin gown, Dickey looked at it very attentively; then putting part of it over his head, said his mamma used to wear such gowns as those, for that he remembered peeping through them.

Such circumstances, however, as these, though they served to convince Mrs. Danby, more than before, of the truth of her conjecture, did not lead to any discovery that might be the means of restoring Dickey to his parents, if he had really been taken from them.

On the following morning, when every one had quitted the breakfast parlour except Mrs. Danby, who was preparing some work for her daughters, Fanny entered the room, with a countenance which indicated a wish to speak to her mother on some subject with which her mind appeared to be occupied. She advanced with an earnestness, yet diffidence in her manner; then said, with a voice that denoted some agitation of mind, "Pray, mamma, am I handsome?"—"Handsome!" exclaimed Mrs. Danby, with a look that expressed her astonishment: "what can induce you, Fanny, to ask so strange a question?"—"I will tell you presently, mamma," replied the innocent child; "but do be so good as to tell me what you think about my being handsome."—"That I can very soon do," said Mrs. Danby; "for I do
not

not think you have, or ever will have, any pretensions to be so called; neither do I think it of any consequence whether you have or not. But I should be sorry to find that this answer created any disappointment with regard to a circumstance which is, in my opinion, of so little importance."

Fanny remained for a few moments silent; then taking the hand of her mother, she said, with some discomposure, yet more earnestness in her manner, "But you *do* love me though, mamma, I'm almost sure? My sister, I believe, is handsomer than I am, so you love her the best, I suppose."—"My dear child," said Mrs. Danby, "your conversation astonishes me more than I can express; what can have given rise to these ideas I am wholly at a loss to conjecture: acquaint me, my dear, more fully with your meaning, and how such thoughts got possession of your mind."—"Yes, mamma," replied Fanny; "I will tell you all about it; for I never had any notion of your not loving me so well because I was not handsome (supposing I was not handsome), till last night."

"You know, mamma, you sent Susan yesterday evening to inquire how little Sally Simpson did: so when I was on the lawn, I saw her coming back; and I ran through the fields to meet her. 'Well, Susan,' said I, 'how does poor Sally do?' 'Very bad indeed, Miss,' she replied; 'for just as I got to the gate which leads into the court, I saw

Mrs.

Mrs. Simpson come out of the house, crying very bitterly; and when I delivered your mamma's message, she shook her head, and said she must lose her beautiful child, for that she had no hopes of its recovery. And then she lamented in so piteous a manner her hard fate, that her favourite should be taken from her, that my heart ached to hear her. I then asked Susan if she loved Sally better than the other little girls; for I said I thought they all seemed to be very good. Susan said, that might be: yet she certainly loved Sally the best; and no wonder, because she was so pretty: and were she Mrs. Simpson, she would rather bury every child she had, than Sally: for though she was passionate, and fretful too, sometimes, what did that signify? she was so handsome, that every thing she did became her. So then I asked Susan, whether she thought my mamma would love me any better for being handsome. Susan said, that she would, to be sure; so would every body else, except those who envied me for being so. I was very much surprised to hear this, for I never before thought about being pretty or otherwise; but as I did not like to ask Susan whether I was or not, I ran up stairs as soon as I came home, and looked in the glass to try if I could find it out; but as I could see no likeness between Sally Simpson and myself, I thought I was *not* handsome: however, I was determined to ask you about it, because

cause if you, and my papa, and every body would like me the better for it, I should wish to be so."

"My dearest child," said Mrs. Danby, embracing her little girl, "how your openness with regard to this circumstance delights me! had you not thus communicated your conversation with Susan, I should neither have had an opportunity of eradicating from your mind the pernicious and false notions she has endeavoured to impress upon it, nor of reprimanding her for a fault which so justly deserves reproof. Beauty, my dear Fanny, is an accidental quality; therefore cannot bring with it any real merit, or true respectability. On the contrary, should the possessor of this precarious, and, at best, short-lived ornament, be deficient in the more estimable qualities of prudence and discretion, it frequently proves the cause of fatal and irremediable misery. That any mother can be so vain, foolish, and sinful, as to suffer personal beauty to influence her in her affection for her children, appears to me so incredible, that I can scarcely suppose any such circumstance exists. Little, indeed, would such mothers (if any such there are) merit the blessing of being parents. This subject brings to my recollection a circumstance that I will now relate to you, and which I think is calculated to make a more lively impression upon your mind than any remark I have to offer. I doubt not, my dear, but you recollect hearing me mention a lady of the name of
Burton,

Burton, with whom I was particularly acquainted when we lived in London.

“Mrs. Burton was left a widow early in life, with two daughters, to whom she was the most affectionate and attentive of parents. Maria, the eldest, was an exceedingly pretty child; and when she became old enough to be sensible of her attractions, she imagined that the beauty she possessed gave her a superiority over her companions: in consequence of this opinion, she became so extremely vain and arrogant, as to render herself an object of dislike to every one with whom she associated. This unhappy temper Mrs. Burton beheld with the utmost concern; but every attempt to correct it proved utterly fruitless. The behaviour of this insolent girl appeared peculiarly disagreeable, when opposed to the engaging manners and obliging disposition of her sister Catharine; who, though she possessed no advantages of person, except a pleasing countenance, was admired and beloved by all who had the happiness of being acquainted with her. At the time of our leaving London, Maria Burton had attained the age of sixteen; Catharine was fourteen months younger.

“The different traits which appeared in their characters while they were children became more conspicuous as they approached towards womanhood. Maria, despising all admonition and reproof, became so haughty, vain, and conceited, as to render herself the object of universal contempt and derision.

When

When introduced into company, it was her first care to look round, and see if any one present could vie with her in beauty of person or elegance of dress. If this point was decided in her own favour, she endeavoured to make every one feel her superiority, and displayed her imaginary triumph in a manner which made her appear truly contemptible in the eyes of every sensible person. If, on the contrary, she thought herself eclipsed, the ill humour and chagrin which this disappointment occasioned, she could not conceal; and on her return home, behaved to her mother and sister in a manner which rendered them extremely unhappy.

“Mrs. Burton, perhaps, treated this infatuated girl with too much lenity; flattering herself that time and experience would have a better effect than severity, and convince her of the folly of her conduct. This hope was strengthened by a knowledge of Maria’s abilities; for you will be astonished, my dear Fanny, to hear, that the faulty conduct I have been describing, was not owing to a weak capacity; but on the contrary, that Maria Burton possessed an understanding by no means contemptible. How greatly is it to be lamented then, that so valuable a gift should be so wretchedly perverted! and how careful should we be of suffering our better judgment to be blinded by prejudices so destructive to every virtuous feeling, and which deprive us of a taste for relishing the most valuable enjoyments of life!

life! A few weeks ago I had a letter from this lady, some passages of which I will read to you, relative to these two sisters. Step up stairs, my dear, and bring down my letter-box."

Fanny eagerly ran to her mamma's apartment, to execute this commission; when Mrs. Danby, having found the letter, read from it the following passage:

"Happy should I think myself, my dear friend, could I say that your kind wishes respecting Maria were in any degree fulfilled. But, alas! this unhappy girl, though in possession of every blessing which renders life desirable, destroys her own happiness, and that of those about her, by indulging notions that must render her highly culpable in the sight of God and her fellow-creatures. Notwithstanding all my efforts to bear up under the afflictions which this undutiful child creates me, I feel that her conduct preys upon my spirits, and even affects my health. How then should I support myself under the pressure, were it not for the consoling tenderness and invariable attentions of my beloved Catharine? This amiable girl is on the point of being united to a man whose character is such as is likely to ensure her future happiness, as far as the precarious circumstances of the present life admit. And what greatly enhances the pleasure with which I look forward to this event, is the prospect of having her settled in a habitation not far from my own house. It is natural to suppose that Maria would
rejoice

rejoice at her sister's good fortune, and that it would give her pleasure to see Catharine connected with a man whose character is unexceptionable, and whose circumstances are not only easy but affluent. Yet it is far otherwise; for this subject is never mentioned without exciting the displeasure of Maria. The preference shown to her sister, she seems to regard as an affront to herself. From the above particulars, you will perceive, my dear friend, that I am likely to possess but an unpleasant companion, when deprived, in some measure, of the society of my amiable Catharine. But I should think myself guilty of unpardonable selfishness, were I to view the approaching event with any other sentiments than those of joy and satisfaction."

Here Mrs. Danby left off reading, and turning to Fanny, said, "Well, my love, which of these sisters would you wish to resemble? The beautiful Maria, or the admirable Catharine?"—"O mamma!" replied Fanny, "I am sure you know which I must admire, and which I must dislike. Should I ever feel the least wish to be handsome, I will think of this disagreeable young lady; and I should dread the thoughts of being like her in any thing."

Fanny had no sooner pronounced these words, than her brother George entered the room, with a petition that she would accompany him into the garden to look at some flowers which he greatly admired; so away they ran, with light hearts and nimble

nimble footsteps. Mrs. Danby immediately sent for the servant who had endeavoured to instil into Fanny's mind notions so absurd and erroneous as those I have already mentioned; and after reproving her with some severity for her fault, and pointing out the bad effects that might have arisen from it, accepted her promises of avoiding such conduct in future. It was only on this condition that her continuance in the family was permitted. Nor did Mrs. Danby rely entirely on such assurances, but was determined to watch over her young family with even increased attention. When she reflected on what Fanny had said, she was charmed with the simplicity and openness which her dear little girl had shown in the above conversation.

On the following day, Sophia sat down to her pen, and thus expressed herself to her dear Maria :

To Miss MOLINEUX.

" Rose Hill, July 18.

" Your kind and long letter, my dear Maria, gave me very great pleasure. I am quite rejoiced to find you are so happy at school, and that your governess behaves in such an agreeable manner to you; also that the young ladies appear so friendly.

" My mamma told me that I might write for about half an hour, when Fanny and I are to accompany her to Mr. Oswald's, to inquire after his health, as my brothers brought word this morning

that

that he was not quite so well as usual. I wish I could go with a light heart, and a mind free from regret and unavailing sorrow. You are surprised at this confession, Maria; and I am sure you will be concerned to hear that I have done a thing that I bitterly repent of. Oh that I were once again relieved from this sad perplexity! and never, till I had a right to act and judge for myself, would I venture to engage in any thing of consequence, without the approbation of my papa and mamma. But what does it signify mentioning this to you, when I am prevented from acquainting you with the particulars?

“Yet tell me, my dear friend, how far you think a promise ought to be binding, that was artfully extorted from me, without my approbation; from me, who you know am but a child, and have no right to do any thing of myself? Yet I hope it is some excuse for me, that my motive was a good one; for it was entirely to endeavour to make others happy, that I was prevailed upon to do what I have done. However, it was very presumptuous to do it without leave. But what shall I do now? I had forgotten, while I was writing the above, that I intended carrying this letter to my mamma when I had finished it. Well! I hope it will be all for the best; for when she finds that her poor girl is so perplexed, she will think of some means to extricate her from a situation so uncomfortable, without suffering her to add another fault to that which she has already committed.

What

What I have said in this letter cannot, I hope be called breaking my promise, as I have neither mentioned names nor circumstances. But I shall have time to think farther of this, as my letter is not to be sent away these three days.

“ I must now mention a little circumstance which happened last Sunday, and which both surprised and concerned me. As soon as we came from church, I attended my mamma as usual in her closet, to repeat what I could remember of the sermon. I then went for Fanny, who, after she had told mamma part of the text, was asked what she could recollect about the sermon? Fanny said, that Mr. Oswald told us that good people were always the happiest; she also mentioned two or three other things that were said to the same effect. Then looking earnestly at her mother, she said, ‘ To be sure, mamma, you were always quite happy, you are so good.’ I happened to be looking another way; but finding my mamma made no answer, I turned about, and saw the tears trickling down her cheeks so fast, that I was quite shocked. You may be sure Fanny was sadly frightened, and began to cry too. But my mother soon recovered herself, and desired us not to be alarmed; for she said it was only the recollection of past events, which Fanny’s abrupt question had brought afresh into her memory.

Some time hence, my dear children,’ said she, ‘ I will speak more fully on this subject; at present I

am not very well, and it would be too much for me.' You may be sure, dear Maria, that we entreated her not to think of satisfying our curiosity when the mention of this sad circumstance gave her so much disquiet. I will never, I am resolved, say any thing that can lead to so distressing a subject, however much I may wish to be informed of it.

"But my time is more than expired, I am sure; I wonder Fanny has not been here to tell me so; and lest my mamma should think me unmindful of her orders, I will now take leave of my dear Maria till to-morrow."

In Continuation.

"Thursday Evening."

"OH! Maria:—I am the happiest girl in the world. My papa and mamma know all that I have done; and I have told no untruth, and they forgive me—freely forgive me. Nor did I even meet with a reproof; because they saw how fully convinced I was of the error I had committed, and how unhappy I had been. As soon as I had received the forgiveness of my dear parents, I ran up to my closet, and there returned thanks to God for all his goodness to me, and particularly for giving me so kind a papa and mamma.

"When I began the former part of this letter, I earnestly wished it were in my power, without breaking a promise, to acquaint my dear friend with every

every particular relating to the affair, about which I have been so uneasy. This I am sure would have afforded me great comfort; but now that it is so happily over, I will make the story less tedious by trying to relate it to you in fewer words: I will not omit doing this, lest you, my dear Maria, or any of your friends, should be in danger of being drawn into a like dilemma. If you think this circumstance will serve as a caution to your school-fellows, I give you leave to show this letter to any of the young ladies you may think proper; for I am sure no good can come from any scheme that is to be kept secret from parents and governesses.

“ You know what a good opinion my mamma has always had of our Ann, and how kind she has been to her; you will be quite shocked to hear that she has proved herself very unworthy of it. You can have no notion of the art she made use of, to prevail upon me to hear her story, and to promise her not to acquaint my mamma, or any one else, that I knew any thing about it. After telling me a great deal about her distress and anxiety, she informed me that it was occasioned by a brother whom she loved very much, having brought himself into difficulties that he could not get the better of, and that he had been in prison for several weeks. A small sum of money, added to what she already was possessed of, would enable her, she said, to set him at liberty; when he would return to his former employment,

ployment, which was that of a carpenter, and pay her what she had advanced, with his wages as he received them. They were prevented, she said, from applying to an old uncle, who was very well able to assist them; because, if he were acquainted with the situation into which her brother had imprudently thrown himself, the consequence would be, that they should lose the old man's favour, and he would leave what he was worth to other relations who had not so good a right to it.

“It was in vain that I tried to persuade Ann to mention these circumstances to my mamma; her answer was, that she had promised her brother in the most solemn manner, that no one but myself should be made acquainted with them. But not to tire you with unnecessary repetitions, I will only add, that Ann contrived to get from me the contents of my purple and silver purse, which, you know, all together, made a pretty handsome sum of money. As I had more than either my brothers or Fanny, I had intended making them some pretty present with a part of it, when I went next to Exeter. I also intended buying some books, and purchasing a stuff gown for Mary Ford, and a coat for Sally. But these plans I believe are all at an end, for I don't expect ever to receive any of the money I have parted with so imprudently: for you will find by the letter I am now going to copy, that it is probable I have done more harm than good with it. The letter was
brought

brought by a little boy, soon after dinner, and is as follows: but I ought to have told you, that Ann has been absent these two days with mamma's leave.

“ ‘DEAR MISS SOPHIA,

“ ‘THOUGH I am ashamed to write to you, yet I am determined to do it, because by writing I can release you from your promise, which I know has sat heavy upon your mind, being a young lady who loves truth and sincerity: I wish I had loved the truth too, and then I should not have been what I am. I know I must be despised by all your good family, when I tell you that the money which you were so good as to lend me, was not to pay my brother's debts with, but a young man's to whom I am since married. But God knows, if all be true that I have heard this morning, I had better have let him remain in jail still. But let that be as it may, I think myself the same obliged to you.

“ ‘Pray, dear Miss, be so good as to ask pardon for me of my honoured master and mistress, whom I now heartily wish I had never offended: for I fear I have been working out my own ruin.

“ ‘As soon as ever I can raise the money I borrowed from you, I will send it with thanks, and am in the mean time

“ ‘Your servant to command,

“ ‘ANN WOOD.’

“ When

“ When I first read this letter, I was so overjoyed at the thoughts of being restored to my liberty, and of no longer being obliged to prevaricate with my mamma, that I did not attend, as I otherwise should have done, to the ill consequences which are likely to result from my folly. This I have been thinking of a good deal since I copied the letter, and it makes me a little melancholy. Ann, to be sure, may thank herself for all; yet I should be very sorry that she were made unhappy by *any* means; especially as she seems sorry for having done wrong. But I will try to prevail on my papa and mamma to see these poor people, and I dare say their talking to them will have a good effect; and if they behave well in future, they will not, I am persuaded, want for proper encouragement.

“ I will now look over what I have written, and see whether I have said all that I intended about this disagreeable affair. On taking a view of the foregoing pages, I find I can have given you but a very slight and imperfect idea of the uncomfortable situation I have been in for some time past.

“ After I had given Ann the money, I could not help thinking there was a change in her behaviour, which I did not like, yet I had not courage sufficient to speak to her about it. This made me very uneasy; for I thought all was not as it should be. But what was worse to me than any thing else, was, my being obliged to give evasive answers to questions

questions asked me by my mamma; for she too perceived a change in Ann's manner, and inquired if I observed it, or knew by what it was occasioned. You will easily guess how distressing such questions must have been to me, who could so well have informed her of things which she ought to have known. How happy do I think myself, that I have no longer such a weight upon my mind! and never, never will I again be persuaded to do any thing of moment without the knowledge and consent of my dear mamma.

"But I will now relieve you from this unpleasant subject; and if I have tired you too much, you will have the goodness to consider that I did it with a view to caution you and others against the arts of designing servants. Though this may be quite unnecessary (for I doubt not but you and your companions would have acted much better than I did, in the same circumstances), yet I know you will excuse me, because my intention is good.

"Fanny is just come to say that my mamma wishes to see me.

"Accept our love, and believe me, dear Maria,
 "Most affectionately your friend,
 "SOPHIA DANBY."

Miss Danby had no sooner finished her letter, than she tripped to her mother's apartment with a lighter heart than she had for some time possessed.

Mrs. Danby told her daughters that she was going to drink tea at Mr. Crosbie's; and that they, as well as their brothers, were to accompany her and their father. A very short time was sufficient to tie on their clean white frocks, and comb out their artless ringlets; a style of dress beyond which our young ladies had never formed a wish, nor, as relating to themselves, scarcely entertained an idea.

Strangely perverted by fashion and prejudice must the opinion of that person be, who did not regard Sophia Danby, in this simple dress, as an object infinitely more engaging than either of the Miss Masters's, when attired in their finest laces and their most brilliant ornaments. In the countenance and manners of the former, the most unaffected good humour, elegant simplicity, and obliging attention, were displayed; in the latter, an air of conscious superiority, a studied address, and a premature attempt to imitate the manners of a woman of fashion, were very conspicuous. Yet such was the partiality of Mrs. Masters to her daughters, and such her fondness for whatever seemed to bear an affinity to the great world, that although she admired the unstudied graces which rendered the manners of Sophia Danby so captivating, yet such a degree of simplicity in her daughters she would have regarded as a quality unsuited to their rank in life, and to the education she was bestowing upon them. But to return to our narrative.

We will now attend the happy party which, about five o'clock, set out from Rose Hill towards Mr. Crosbie's, and which consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Danby, their two daughters, and two eldest sons. The spirits of the young people were too much exhilarated, and their minds too much occupied by sportive ideas, to suffer them to walk soberly along in one regular pace. The delighted parents of these happy children beheld their playful excursions with hearts overflowing with affectionate love and grateful sensations: grateful for these inestimable blessings bestowed upon them by a kind Providence.

When Mr. and Mrs. Danby, and their family, entered Mr. Crosbie's drawing-room, they found there, Mrs. Masters and the young ladies; Mr. Falkland and his son, with Mrs. Walker and Henrietta; and in a few minutes afterwards, the good Mr. Oswald added another to the party.

Master Falkland had already frequently been called upon to defend himself against the raillery of his acquaintance, relative to his late exploit and its consequences. However, he was not disappointed in the expectation of a renewal of this subject, although he would willingly have excused its revival. Mr. Danby had not long been seated before he thus addressed him:

Mr. D. "Well, my young hero, have you any new adventures to entertain us with? any more

exploits to recount to us? But I'm afraid these busy fellows, so insensible to the glory you had acquired, have drowned your laurels by that unfortunate plunge. However, you no doubt mean to rescue your weeping honours from so ignoble a tomb, by performing some act of valour equally magnanimous with that of carrying off in triumph farmer Jones's purse."

Mr. F. "I believe Ned is heartily sick of the honour resulting from this achievement, and would readily transfer the crown of victory to any one whose brows are as yet unadorned with so resplendent a trophy."

Mr. D. "But if his glory be something tarnished by the scene exhibited at the edge of the pond, yet he will be highly gratified by the sympathy which so pathetic a circumstance must produce in the minds of these young ladies. Tell me, Ned, has not the tender condolence of Miss Masters amply repaid you for the mortifying consequences of that perverse accident?"

Master F. "I am sure, Sir, Miss Masters has too much good sense to bestow an uneasy thought on so unworthy an object."

Mr. D. "Very well, Master Edward; modesty ever attends true bravery: it is a happy union when these two qualities contend for pre-eminence. However, do not let an over-degree of diffidence lead you to view your great actions through a medium that
would

would place them too much upon a level with the unimportant events to be met with in common life. I wish to remind you, that there is a certain distinction to be made between great characters and those who are content to plod on in the beaten track. This distinction I would have you keep in view, which is by no means incompatible with that modesty for which I admire you."

Mr. F. "I believe I must put in a word for my son, and sue for a truce. How is it with you, Ned? Have you any thing to say to Mr. Danby?"

Master F. "I was just going to return Mr. Danby thanks, Sir, for a pleasing sensation which he has produced. I was much too warm a few minutes ago, but the thought of the water has occasioned an agreeable chillness."

Here a general burst of laughter ensued, and Mr. Falkland disclaimed any intention of a farther interference, since his son seemed to be so well qualified for defending himself against the attack of his opponent. The subject was thus continued by Mr. Danby:

Mr. D. "Oh! your most obedient, my young squire; you intend being a candidate for fame in the senate, as well as the field, I believe. Your talents are not confined to acts of valour, it seems. I must take care I am not foiled where I expected to come off victorious; however, a regard for my own safety, and the safety of my neighbours, induces

me to inquire with all humility, if your great and noble designs be still of a hostile nature? To inform us of this, would, I think, be worthy of a generous conqueror."

Master F. "I believe, Sir, the peace of the neighbourhood will be in no danger of receiving any disturbance from me. My father has declared his intentions of sending me to engage my old combatants, who, though placed rank and file, will suffer me to approach them without the smallest opposition."

Mr. D. "Apropos! my young Grecian; I know you have not kept company with these reverend gentlemen in vain; and I now call upon you for a proof. I know the ladies will pardon me for taking this liberty in their presence."

Mr. Oswald then addressed Master Falkland in the Greek language, on which that young gentleman, who was formerly a pupil of Mr. Oswald's, immediately arose, and, with great accuracy, repeated a fine passage from the Iliad of Homer. Mrs. Danby then requested he would oblige the company with the same passage, as translated by Mr. Pope, if he had it in his memory: this also he instantly complied with. The Master Danbys were then called upon by their good preceptor to follow the example of their friend. This they did with great readiness, though not without some little embarrassment. They each received the applauses of the company, when

when the entrance of the tea equipage gave a turn to the conversation.

When this repast was concluded, Mr. and Mrs. Crosbie were going to conduct their guests into the garden, where the blooming peach, the juicy nectarine, and a variety of other fruits, solicited the hand of the gatherer. But this intention was frustrated by a sudden change that took place in the weather. The sun, which a little time before had shone with such splendour, now withdrew his beams; and the rain, which at first descended in a slight shower only, was soon increased to a degree which rendered all hopes of a walk in the garden entirely fruitless.

Mrs. Crosbie was at a loss what amusement she should substitute for her young visitors, that would, in any degree, console them for their disappointment. At length she recollected having some cards, on each of which she had written a few lines in verse; she would not say poetry, as she did not consider them entitled to such an appellation, being merely intended for the amusement of her young friends. Mrs. Crosbie no sooner recollected this circumstance, than she ran up stairs and brought down her collection, which she distributed among the young people with apparent equality, and in an indiscriminate manner; but Mrs. Danby imagined she saw some little contrivance in the disposal of two or three of them; yet as this was only con-

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jecture,

jecture, I do not pretend to ascertain the fact. While this lady was thus employed, she requested the indulgence of the company, and entreated that they would not regard her little performances with a criticising eye: she hoped they would attend to the sentiments, which, she flattered herself, were just; and not too nicely regard the manner in which they were expressed. From this collection we shall only transcribe such as were first drawn, and which were read as follows, each by its respective owner, in due order:

MISS MASTERS.

"How rapid, oh Time! is thy flight!
How incessant thy silent career!
How soon will perpetual night
Destroy my life's transient year!

"Oh Wisdom! while yet it is day,
With thy brightness illumine my mind:
By the glance of a heavenly ray
Be it guided, enlarg'd, and refin'd."

MISS DANBY.

"Ah! who is this weeping disconsolate child,
That approaches so mournful and slow?
Poor baby! I fear thou art sadly beguil'd
By some cruel and treacherous foe.

"But

"But see, she advances; and now I can trace
Her name in her features of woe:
'Tis Pity; oh! come to my bosom—a place
From whence I will ne'er let thee go."

MASTER FALKLAND.

"How steep yon craggy mountain's lofty sides,
Which oft the careless traveller derides!
But he who patient treads the devious way,
Nor tempted here to wander, there to stray,
Attains the summit; then enraptur'd owns
The prospect all his wishes amply crowns.
Would you, my friends, this lovely prospect view,
The Hill of Science is—accessible to you."

MISS WALKER.

"Fragrant is the op'ning rose,
Sweet the scent the pink bestows,
Lovely the carnation's hue,
Bright the harebell's beauteous blue:
But nor rose's lovely bloom,
Nor carnation's rich perfume,
Can to me such joys dispense
As flow from artless innocence."

MASTER DANBY.

"Oh, sweet Contemplation! celestial maid!
How charming thy rustic retreat!
How awful the silence that reigns in the glade!
The sequester'd recesses, how sweet!

"With

" With thee how delightful to pass the calm day !
 And Wisdom attends in thy train ;
 At a shrine so instructive my homage I'll pay,
 Nor envy the rich and the vain."

MISS E. MASTERS.

" Dear Selina, why so anxious
 For the joys that fade so soon ?
 Soon the airy trifles vanish :
 Morning hopes cut down at noon."

" But the seeds of virtue, planted
 Here, shall live their little day ;
 Then, a richer soil obtaining,
 Spring and bloom, nor know decay."

MISS F. DANBY.

" Much do I delight to see
 Native sensibility ;
 Fondly do I love to trace,
 In the young and artless face,
 Sympathy that fervent glows,
 Pity for another's woes ;
 Feelings of a worthy kind,
 Dawnings of a noble mind."

MASTER W. DANBY.

" Though to distant scenes you roam,
 Still revere your native home :

There

There your artless days were spent,
 Days replete with calm content.
 The world, 't is true, has much in store;
 Much will give, and promise more:
 When the varied scene is past,
 Home's our sweet resource at last."

In a short time after this, Mrs. Danby and Sophia being at work together in the parlour, the former took a letter from her pocket-book, and, giving it to Miss Danby, desired she would take an opportunity of perusing it with attention. Sophia soon retired to her own apartment, and, hastily opening her letter, read as follows:

To Miss DANBY.

"MY DEAR SOPHIA,

"WHEN we last conversed upon the subject which has caused you so much uneasiness, you appeared so perfectly sensible of the error you had committed, that I think it unnecessary to renew a subject which brings along with it some unpleasing reflections. However, I hope the consequences of this event will be beneficial in regard to your subsequent conduct. Indeed I have no doubt but my dear Sophia will in future be more upon her guard against being induced to enter into engagements without the consent and approbation of those whose am-
 bition

bition it has ever been to promote her true happiness. You must not therefore suppose, my love, that in addressing this letter to you I am actuated by doubt and distrust, arising from the circumstance just mentioned. Prior to this event, it was my intention to throw together a few thoughts on paper, flattering myself that they might be of use to my dear children, when, perhaps, the hand that writes, and the heart that dictates, may no longer possess the power of fulfilling so important and so pleasing a task.

“I would not wish to wound your sensibility by anticipating an event which I hope (if consistent with the decrees of an all-wise Providence) may be at a great distance; but which, in the common course of nature, my children must at some period expect to meet with. Yet would I remind my Sophia, that our dearest engagements here are held by a slight and frail tenure; that a day, an hour, nay, even a moment, may not elapse before we shall be called upon to act our part in the unpleasant, but frequently not unprofitable, school of adversity. We are often overtaken by misfortune and calamity, when, perhaps, we least expect to meet with such stern and gloomy companions. I would therefore point out to you, in the most forcible manner I am able, the necessity of seeking for some sure and certain support when every earthly blessing shall retire from our pursuit and elude our grasp.

“I am perfectly sensible that there are many
writers

writers who have treated this subject in a manner infinitely superior to what it is in my power to do: but although my abilities render me so little qualified for fulfilling a task which others have performed in so successful a manner, yet I am induced to exert those abilities to the utmost, from the persuasion, that the best advice I am capable of giving will be gratefully received, and by my dear children will be regarded as a precious deposit, carrying along with it the strongest and the tenderest testimony of a parent's love, a love which the heart of a parent alone can feel, and which no language, however expressive, can adequately describe.

“My dear Sophia, grateful and affectionate as she is, is incapable of conceiving the degree of solicitude which agitates the heart of a fond mother when she looks forward to the characters her children may form, and the part they will act in mature life.

“It is my wish to see them adorned with such accomplishments as will render them suitable companions for those whose minds are refined by science, enlarged by true wisdom, and ennobled by virtue; and whose manners are regulated by the fascinating charms of unaffected politeness and polished elegance. Yet these acquirements, prepossessing and ornamental as they are, exist but as second causes; my warmest hopes and chief ambition being placed in the ardent and pleasing expectation of seeing you
amiable

amiable and worthy. Dispossessed of the solid advantages which real merit bestows, the most brilliant accomplishments are but as tinsel ornaments, whose want of intrinsic value renders them contemptible in the estimation of every judicious person: but a character which exhibits the virtues of piety, humanity, sincerity, and truth, must always command respect and approbation, however deficient those refinements which a highly cultivated understanding and an elegant taste bestow: if, therefore, I must not hope to see in my children a union of these qualities, I earnestly wish to behold them honest, though plain; sober, virtuous, and good, though not polished. But I trust I am not indulging delusive hopes when I anticipate a union of what is pleasing and valuable, agreeable and good, in the minds and manners of those for whom I feel so much solicitude, and for whom I have such an earnest desire to fulfil those important duties allotted me by Providence: where I have been deficient in executing those duties in a proper manner, may you, my dear, have penetration to detect my errors, and ability to avoid them!

“ You, my dear Sophia, may be placed in a different situation of life from that which has been appointed to me; consequently a different plan will be necessary for you to adopt from that which I have usually pursued: yet I think there are some maxims and rules which you may carry along with you,

as

as not incompatible with any station. But, in the first place, I will turn my attention to the subject which, of all others, I regard as the most important, and which is indeed the foundation of every virtue that can adorn the human character—I mean piety. With the utmost earnestness I entreat of you to cultivate in your mind this disposition; for, divested of this, every other attainment is of little value, and can yield no solid satisfaction, nor be attended with any real utility. An early and habitual piety is the source whence springs an inexhaustible fund of the most exalted pleasures: it enhances every delight, and gives to every object we behold an additional charm. And even in this world, where every thing is tending to decay, and perishing around us, it offers a support of which nothing can deprive us. A well-grounded piety, that has the God of ages for its basis, is stronger even than the rock of adamant: for the rock which has stood firm and unshaken, and against which the ocean has dashed its tremendous waves in vain, and the winds have in vain spent their fury, shall one day yield to the ravages of time. The ocean itself shall be dried up, and the mountain shall disappear; but the soul that is filled with righteousness, and adorned with true piety, shall flourish in the kingdom of God, unhurt by the destruction of a thousand worlds. When ‘the elements shall melt with fervent heat,’ and all nature give way to an universal dissolution, this

this immortal spark of heavenly fire. shall shine with increased brightness, and unite with angels and archangels in singing a song of never-ending praises to the beneficent Author of all good, the great Jehovah. Not even death itself can destroy this radiant and divine spirit implanted within us by a gracious and good God, which, after flourishing for a time in the precarious soil of this decaying world, shall spring anew in one that will exist for ever. In this blissful world it shall bloom with inconceivable and immortal brightness, when the sun has forgotten to shine, when the seasons shall no more succeed each other, and when day and night shall be no longer divided.

“ I will now endeavour to point out to my Sophia the means by which she shall attain to this blissful state, and acquire a frame of mind suitable and preparatory to her entrance into it; a frame of mind that will give an additional relish to every enjoyment here; that will be a never-failing source of comfort in the hour of distress; and at length be the means of conducting her safely through the gloomy valley of death; and lastly, introduce her into a world of endless happiness and inconceivable felicity.

“ Accustom yourself to think of God, as of a friend possessed of an inexhaustible treasure, whose liberal hand is constantly stretched out towards you, dispensing blessings whose numbers are countless, and of whose variety there is no end. When you
awake

awake in the morning, let your first thoughts be directed to this Friend, whose eye watched over you while you slept, and whose power shielded you from danger. Let the grateful effusions of your heart ascend to Heaven, humbly ascribing praise and glory to that God in whom you live, and move, and have your being.

“Previous to your engaging in the occupations of the day, make it your constant practice to read a small portion of scripture, with a devout and attentive disposition of mind: and while with an humble and a grateful heart you prostrate yourself at the footstool of the throne of God, to thank him for past favours, and solicit his future protection, endeavour as much as possible to withdraw your thoughts from all worldly cares, pleasures, and pursuits: but do not imagine that when this duty is performed you are to banish God from your thoughts, till the close of the day calls upon you to enter more immediately into his presence, and pay the tribute of your evening praise.

“Yet think not I wish to confine your thoughts to serious subjects: far from it. What I mean is, that you frequently call off your attention from the concerns of this world, and fix your thoughts upon God. Put up a silent but fervent ejaculation to the Searcher of hearts, and let yours glow with gratitude, that, with a thousand other blessings, he has given you the power of holding with him so sweet

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a communion. An intercourse such as this, delightful experience will soon convince you, is far beyond any gratification which temporal things and sublunary concerns could possibly offer to your acceptance. The sweet consciousness of acting in such a manner as to obtain the favour and conciliate the affections of your heavenly Father, is to anticipate in some degree, even while in this world, the joys which are in reserve for you in that which is to come; where, if you act well and worthily while in this probationary state, you will be crowned with uninterrupted peace and increasing happiness through all eternity.

“Should that silent but faithful monitor implanted within you, and implanted there for purposes the most beneficial, speak to you in a language that upbraids you with the commission of an error, seek not to silence so friendly a counsellor, but listen to the timely remonstrance: reflect on the nature of your offence: delay not a moment to humble yourself before God. With a truly contrite and penitent heart implore his forgiveness for the past, and supplicate his aid in fortifying your mind for the time to come, to resist every temptation that would lead you from your duty to Him and to your fellow-creatures. Let not a sense of your unworthiness restrain you from performing this necessary act; an act which is required of you by that God who is ever gracious and attentive to the prayer of the true penitent.

nitent. When your own feelings convict you of having wandered from your duty, let no circumstance whatever restrain you from endeavouring immediately to regain that path of rectitude which alone is the path of peace. The only way of effecting this, is the method I have already pointed out: begin by making your peace with God; then seriously and candidly consider what is farther required of you. Have you injured any one in thought, in word, or in deed, take the earliest opportunity of making the best reparation in your power: this done, you may in peace lay your head on your pillow, and consign yourself to that sweet repose which is seldom enjoyed by those whose minds are stained with reflections that flow from a source which Guilt has polluted, and which Error has tinged with her dark and comfortless rays.

“ I will now, my dear, say a few words respecting the education we are giving you, and what are our hopes and expectations in regard to its result. It is the opinion of your honoured father and myself, that any other plan than that which we have hitherto adopted appears to be unnecessary: and what contributes greatly to confirm us in this opinion, is the approbation which our good Mr. Oswald has expressed on this subject. Were we obliged to rely solely on our own judgment, there might be danger of our being biassed by partiality, both as to the mode of conveying instruction, and the manner of
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its being received : but favoured as we are by the advice of so kind and so judicious a friend, the danger, I hope, is obviated. In regard to your brothers, the assistance of this friend renders us perfectly easy.

“ Some weeks ago I heard my dear Sophia express something like a wish of learning music. Before I gave my sentiments on the subject, I was willing to consider it with attention, and also consult with your papa. I am happy to say that we view this affair exactly in the same light : and if our decision does not meet with the immediate approbation of my dear Sophia, I have no doubt but on reflecting upon what I am going to say, she will yield a ready assent to our determination. I profess myself to be a great admirer of music ; and I think those who excel in this pleasing accomplishment possess a talent that will probably be productive of much pleasure to themselves and their friends. But with respect to a daughter of my own, I confess I should be apt to view a gift of this nature in the same light in which I should regard a dangerous intruder. When an ardent love of music has taken possession of the mind, I should greatly fear it would encroach upon the time that ought to be appropriated to more important purposes. Yet I should feel a reluctance to repress an ardour for cultivating a taste which Nature had implanted in the mind. But to indulge this propensity with propriety, a young lady should, in my opinion, have prospects in point of fortune, that

that would place her above the middle rank in life. In the sphere in which my daughters are likely to move, there are so many important duties to fulfil, that I should deem it impossible to devote so much time to the study of music as is requisite to make even a tolerable proficiency, without sacrificing to this one accomplishment many of those hours which might be much more usefully occupied.

"It is with the utmost cheerfulness, and even pleasure, that I see you devote that portion of time to what I deem ornamental acquisitions, which your dancing-master and your drawing-master demand of you: but were we to introduce a music-master also, I am convinced that *you* must sustain an injury from such an introduction, and *I* an inconvenience. I am sure my Sophia would sit down to her pianoforte with very little satisfaction, when she found that in consequence of her so doing I should be under the necessity of confining myself more to my needle than would be consistent either with my health or my inclination: yet this must inevitably be the case, unless I obviated the difficulty by incurring an expence which I have hitherto avoided, and which I now regard as unnecessary.

"After having urged this argument, I am fully persuaded that to offer any other would be quite superfluous. However, I will candidly acquaint you with the sentiments of your papa and myself, in regard to the talents you possess with respect to music.

I have no doubt but that by application, and a strict attention to this art, you would in time make such a progress as would entitle you to the character of an agreeable performer. I also think that your voice is capable of being improved to such a degree as would render it a pleasing accompaniment to your instrument: but you must excuse me, my dear, if I say, that farther than this I never could discover in you any natural genius or peculiar turn for this science.

“ I will now advert to subjects which I shall discuss with much more pleasure, as they lead to observations that give me hopes of your acquiring a fondness for those employments in which I am desirous of seeing you an early proficient.

“ How greatly to be pitied are those females who, because destitute of a taste for the rational and common enjoyments of life, regard many hours of the day as insupportably tedious! When neither cards, company, the labours of the toilette, nor public amusements, offer themselves to give wings to the passing hours, with what leaden feet does Time appear to move! But if I regard with pity such characters as these, that pity is mingled with contempt. Without feeling a degree of this sentiment, it is not possible to contemplate the character of that person who can find no delight in the alternate recreations of reading, walking, working, and the conversation of agreeable friends. They who are destitute of such resources as these, to make time pass pleasantly along,

along, are strangers to the purest joys that sweeten life, and which give to the social and susceptible mind the most delightful sensations. How grateful to the heart of sensibility is the society of those we love! How satisfactory to the reflecting mind is the retrospect we take of those hours which have been spent in improving conversations! and how wide is the field that opens itself for entertainment and instruction, where the amiable and the well-informed contribute each their share to give to conversation its most attractive charm! How interesting are the remarks and observations made by the wise and judicious on the works of learning and of genius with which the literary world abounds! And when these subjects occur in the presence of young persons, I should be very sorry to see any that I had a regard for, disclaim that share of pleasure and instruction which properly belongs to them, and which, by a silent attention, it is in their power to obtain: not that I would have them observe so strict a silence as would preclude them from seizing a favourable opportunity of making such inquiries as would add to their stock of knowledge. This may frequently be done without infringing those rules which modesty and diffidence prescribe to the young and inexperienced.

"In enumerating agreeable subjects that give to conversation such attractive charms, how awful, how beautiful, how interesting, are those which

Nature offers to our view! In ten thousand different shapes she solicits our attention, and claims our wonder and admiration: yet, ungrateful as we are, how often do we slight her lovely productions, and behold with a careless eye both her obvious and her minute beauties! We turn from so curious and so productive a history, and condescend to fix our hopes and views on objects whose inferior worth places them in a rank infinitely beneath those which we are so apt to disregard. You, my dear, can scarcely conceive it possible that the most superficial admirer of natural beauties could wander through the delightful meadows that surround Rose Hill, and not feel a degree of rapture in contemplating the beautiful picture which is there sketched out with such inimitable skill. How exquisite the design, how varied the tints, how soft the touches that every where meet the eye! How judiciously are the graces of Nature blended, and how admirable is the effect which the whole produces!

“When I began this letter I intended enlarging on some of those subjects so necessary to be attended to by every young woman who aspires to the attainment of those qualities which can alone render her truly amiable: this I thought I could have done without extending my letter to its present length; I will therefore reserve the discussion of these subjects till some future opportunity.

“Adieu! my beloved Sophia. May you, and
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my other equally dear and amiable children, long continue to enjoy that happiness with which you are at present surrounded ! May you be ever the objects of God's favour, protection, and love ! Through every scene of this changeful life may you continue steady and firm in your obedience to the Author of all happiness, the God of all consolation ! and may you ever preserve unbroken that harmony, love, and affection, with which you are now united ! How greatly will this bond of sisterly and brotherly love serve to soften every affliction and soothe every trouble to which even the most happy are liable in this vale of mortality ! and when the tender and virtuous link is broken on earth, may it be repaired in the kingdom of Heaven, where it shall be formed by indissoluble bonds, bonds of immortal love and harmony ! That we may there meet, to part no more, is a hope which animates the heart of her who now addresses you with a degree of ardour far surpassing any description that words could convey. May that God who reads every emotion of the heart which he has formed, answer its fervent prayer by showering on my children the kindest influence of his divine and parental love !

" SOPHIA DANBY."

Sophia read this letter again and again before she thought of quitting her apartment ; when the clock, striking eleven, reminded her of having been absent

from the parlour more than an hour, though she did not think half that time could have elapsed since she quitted it. On re-entering the room where her mother was sitting, she ran up to her, and, clasping her arms about her neck, said she would try to be all that she wished her. Mrs. Danby returned her dutiful and affectionate embrace with equal warmth, and assured her she had no doubt of the sincerity of her intentions.

In about a week after this period, the weather being remarkably fine, Mr. and Mrs. Danby came to the resolution of paying a visit to a family with whom they had for some time been under the promise of spending a few days. Their friends lived at the distance of about fifteen miles: they took with them Charles and Sophia; leaving William, Fanny, and George, under the care of an old and faithful domestic who had lived in the family of Mrs. Grey, Mrs. Danby's mother, for many years.

On the fourth evening after Mr. and Mrs. Danby's departure, just as William and Fanny were going up to bed, a carriage was heard to drive smartly past the windows, and stop at the hall door. The children instantly exclaimed that their papa and mamma were returned, and eagerly descended the stairs. On the door being opened, our young people were greatly disappointed, and somewhat surprised, to see a perfect stranger descend from the carriage and approach towards them: he inquired whether Mr.

Danby

Danby was at home; and being informed in the negative, he seemed to be undetermined whether he should advance or retreat. The servant who had opened the door then informed him, that his master and mistress were gone to see some friends who lived at a distance, and that the time of their return was rather uncertain. The stranger appeared still to hesitate how he should act, but ordered the carriage to wait. He then cast his eyes on our young folks, whose curiosity was not a little excited as they stood listening to the above conversation.

Mrs. Jane had now entered the hall, and the children were surprised that she did not ask the gentleman to walk into the parlour. This the trusty domestic had avoided doing, from motives of prudence. She could not but think that the arrival of a stranger, in the close of the evening, and in the absence of her master and mistress, was a circumstance that demanded all the discretion and prudence she was mistress of, to enable her to act with propriety in such a conjuncture. When she considered the stranger's face more attentively, a vague kind of conjecture passed across her mind, that the features she then beheld were not entirely unknown to her, though she recollected not when nor where she had seen them. While Mrs. Jane was revolving these things in her mind the gentleman advanced to the place where Fanny and her brother were standing; when

the following conversation immediately ensued:

Stranger. "And do you, my little girl, live in this house?"

Fanny. "Yes, Sir; this is my papa's house."

Stranger. "Your name is Danby then?"

Fanny. "Yes, Sir; Fanny Danby: and my sister's name is Sophia, but she is not at home."

Stranger. "Sophia! (*Pausing.*) What a variety of emotions does that name occasion! What a number of ideas does the well-known sound create in my mind! How often has it resounded through my native abode, uttered by the voice of childish innocence! How often has echo reverberated the name of Sophia through the woods and groves that surrounded my once happy home!"

This soliloquy was uttered in a voice so low, that a few words only could be heard by those present: when the stranger seemed to recollect himself, and spoke to William as follows:

Stranger. "And what is your name, my sweet fellow? If I may judge by your looks, you are ready to inform me not only of this, but of any thing I shall ask."

William. "My name is William Danby, Sir."

Stranger. "William! Did you say William, my dear?"

William. "Yes, Sir; are you surprised that I should be called so? There are many of that name."

Stranger.

Stranger. (Again pausing.) "Ah, my poor Sophia! you did not then forget an unhappy fugitive."

William. "Pray, Sir, walk into the parlour; you seem not to be well. Perhaps we can get something to do you good. I am sure you must be tired with standing here."

The gentleman still appeared to hesitate, but at length accepted the invitation of his young host, who with great readiness placed a chair for his guest, while Fanny and himself took their stations very near him, not knowing what to expect from so uncommon a visit. The gentleman seemed lost in thought, when the entrance of a servant with candles drew him from the reverie into which he was plunged. He eagerly surveyed every object around him. At length a small portrait of Mrs. Danby arrested his attention. With looks of the fondest affection he gazed on this representative of her whose living image was deeply engraven on his heart. In a voice scarcely articulate he exclaimed, "It is, it is the very features of my dear, my lamented, my affectionate sister, whom I once loved with such extreme fondness. Once did I say? Do I not at this moment, did I not ever love her with the tenderest affection? And shall I once again before I die——"

Here the sobs of his young auditors interrupted the train of tender recollections that came crowding into his mind. They were both on their knees

before him. "Oh, Sir!" exclaimed William; "is it possible! can I have an uncle—a brother of my mamma's?"—"You have an uncle, my dear children," replied Mr. Grey; "an unfortunate uncle, who I fear has cost your mother many tears. How have I deserved of Heaven such a reward as this? Do I indeed fold in my arms the children of my Sophia?"—"Dear Sir!" said Fanny, "where have you been so long? Why did we not see you? I never even heard of you till now."—"I have a long story to relate, my love," returned Mr. Grey. "You will ere long, I trust, be acquainted with all the particulars of my eventful life: and may the errors I have been guilty of prove of use to the dear young family whom I am prepared to love—whom I do already love!"

The children wept afresh; they clasped his knees, they kissed his hands, and, by every possible expression of joy and affection, evinced the feelings of their young hearts. Just at this moment Mrs. Jane entered the room. Her looks testified her surprise on beholding the scene which there presented itself to her view. Fanny, instantly disengaging herself from her uncle, ran to her beloved though humble friend, and, had not her agitation prevented her, would have communicated the joy with which her young heart was filled. This behaviour served to astonish and confound the faithful domestic more than ever.

Mr.

Mr. Grey now surveyed her more attentively: then said, "Sure I knew those features before they wore the marks of age! Am I right? Do I indeed behold the once sprightly Jenny Reynolds?" The object to whom these words were addressed was now incapable of replying to the question. She trembled; a faintness seized her; she sunk into a chair: in a few moments, however, she revived: then, in broken and interrupted sentences, uttered the following words: "And is it really Mr. William Grey that I behold? the long-lost, long-lamented brother of my honoured mistress! Then am I satisfied, since I have lived to see this day."—"I hope you will live to see many days, my amiable friend; many days of comfort. Happy shall I be, if I can contribute towards rendering the evening of that life a peaceful one, so many years of which have been spent in the service of those I best love."

When Mrs. Jane had so far recovered her spirits and composure, as to be able to reflect on what was requisite to be done for so welcome a guest, it immediately occurred to her that he probably stood in need of refreshment. The spirits of our young people were too much exhilarated with the events of the evening to admit of any thoughts that bordered on sleep; and, when supper was announced, they were quite ready to attend their uncle into the dining parlour. Fanny was placed at the head of the table; where, after her visitor had dissected a cold fowl, she

had the honour of helping him to a breast. She could not be prevailed upon, however, to taste a morsel herself, as her mamma was not there to grant her permission to do so. But when the dessert of fruit was placed on the table, she had no scruple of partaking it with her uncle and brother.

The conversation naturally turned upon the absentees of the family, Mr. Grey having many questions to ask respecting each individual; nor was little George forgotten, who was enjoying the sweets of a profound sleep, wholly unconscious of the scene in which his brother and sister were engaged.

Mr. Grey inquired if there was a servant in the family who could be spared early in the morning to go as far as the gentleman's house where Mr. and Mrs. Danby were. On being answered in the affirmative, it was agreed that the servant should carry no other intelligence, but that a stranger was arrived, who was come to spend some time with them. This resolution was no sooner taken, than William slept into his father's study, where he wrote the following letter, which he brought to his uncle, to know whether it was such a one as he should think proper to send.

To CHARLES DANBY, Esq.

"DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,

"I AM sure you never would guess who is our visitor at Rose Hill. I say *our* visitor, because Fan-

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ny has taken mamma's place at table, and I yours. If you please, dear papa, you must come home as soon as you can, because this gentleman, who is just come from off a long journey, says he has some good news to tell mamma about a friend of hers that she loves very much. Fanny joins me in duty and love. I am, dear papa,

"Your dutiful son,

"Rose Hill,

"WILLIAM DANBY.

July 16."

Mr. Grey highly approved of this performance of his nephew's, and it was immediately sealed and given to the servant with proper directions.

I shall now beg leave to conduct my young readers to the house of Mr. Stanley, who, with his lady, Mr. and Mrs. Danby, and the young people, were assembled at breakfast, when the following conversation took place:

Mrs. Stan. "Well, my good friends, how shall we dispose of ourselves till dinner-time? Shall we have recourse to books and work, or shall we ride?"

Mrs. D. "I am sure a plan cannot be proposed that will not be agreeable to me."

Mrs. St. "What do you say, gentlemen? may we hope for your company if we make an excursion for a few hours?"

Mr. D. "I am entirely at your disposal, Madam."

Mr. St. "And I. My time is yours, ladies."

Mrs. St. "Suppose then we go and take a view

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of the seat belonging to Lord ——? I think I trace a ready concurrence with my proposal in the countenances of my young friends. Am I right, Sophia? Do you approve of my plan?"

Miss D. "Indeed, Ma'am, I shall like to go very much."

Miss St. "And I'm sure I shall. Sophia, you shall ride my little horse, if you please; and I will go as mamma thinks best."

Miss D. "Thank you, dear Lucy; but I think I ought not again to deprive you of your little horse so soon, as I know you are partial to that manner of travelling."

Mrs. St. "I think I can answer for Lucy's having more pleasure in resigning her favourite to you, Sophia, than in riding it herself."

Miss St. "Indeed I shall, mamma, have much more pleasure. What time shall we go, do you think, Ma'am?"

Mrs. St. "I don't know, my dear. We must consult the gentlemen."

Mr. D. "Does my lord reside now in the country?"

Mr. St. "He was here some weeks ago, but is now gone to a seat nearer the metropolis."

Master D. "Pray, Sir, are there any good paintings to be seen where we are going?"

Mr. St. "There are a few. The collection is small, but I believe well chosen: at least I was greatly

greatly pleased with most of them. But I am no connoisseur."

Mr. D. "I think if they pleased you there can be no doubt but they will have merit sufficient to rank them very high in Charles's estimation."

Master St. "Oh, I am sure Charles will like them exceedingly. There's the blind man and the little boy that is leading him: and the little boy is so natural, and the blind man looks so grateful. Then there's the children at play; and they seem so happy, that I could hardly believe they were only pictures. The poor man begging, too, looks so piteous, that, without considering how foolish it was, I put my hand in my pocket to give him something."

Miss St. "Oh dear! I declare there is Mr. Danby's gardener, who has just now given his horse to Thomas, and is gone into the flagged yard."

Mrs. D. (Alarmed.) "Indeed! Surely none of the children are ill, nor any accident happened to them?"

Mr. D. "Do not alarm yourself, my dear; I hope all is well: I will inquire, and acquaint you immediately with the cause of John's unexpected journey."

Miss D. (Running to her mamma.) "Do not be frightened, dear mamma; I hope nothing is the matter."

Mrs. St. "Indeed I hope not. It is something relating to the farm most probably. But here comes Mr. Danby."

(Re-

(*Re-enter Mr. DANBY.*)

Mr. D. "I have nothing but agreeable intelligence to communicate, my dear friends. Our little ones are all well. But come, let us finish our coffee before it is cold."

Miss D. "How glad I am to hear you say that, papa; for indeed my heart did begin to beat, though I did not tell mamma so. I suppose John had some business though, besides telling us that they were all well."

Mr. D. "We will enter into particulars by and by, if you please, Miss Danby. Patience is a virtue which I would strenuously recommend to young ladies."

Mrs. D. "I am quite satisfied to wait for further information. My mind is relieved from all anxiety for our little family at home, which makes me perfectly easy."

Master D. "Why don't you finish your breakfast, Sophia? I believe the expectation of hearing the news has taken away your appetite."

Mr. D. "Yes, yes; I read in Sophia's eyes what passes in her mind. Young ladies' eyes are sometimes sad tell-tales."

Mrs. St. "But I hope it is not your intention to keep us long in suspense, Mr. Danby? I confess my curiosity is excited."

Mr. D. "When thus called upon, I can no longer withhold what intelligence it is in my power

to

to communicate. But I believe, Madam, instead of satisfying your curiosity, I shall only excite it the more, by reading my son's letter. Neither could I gain any thing by questioning John, except just what the letter acquaints me with. I hope, my dear Mrs. Danby, you will not let this mysterious affair hurry your spirits. There is nothing in it, I dare say, of any consequence. But I will read you the child's letter."

Mrs. Danby appeared greatly agitated, though she endeavoured as much as possible to conceal her apprehensions. She expressed much impatience to return home. Accordingly, every thing was prepared for their speedy departure; and they promised their friends to pay them another visit before the end of the summer, if possible.

Soon after twelve o'clock Mr. and Mrs. Danby, with their son and daughter, arrived safe at Rose Hill. The hall door was no sooner opened than William and Fanny ran up to the side of the chaise with countenances expressive of the liveliest joy. Mrs. Danby trembled and grew pale: Mr. Danby almost carried her into the parlour. Adjoining to this room was a small but pleasant apartment, which went by the name of the garden parlour, the door of which was closed, but not fastened. Sophia ran to get her mother a glass of hartshorn and water. William and Fanny approached their beloved parent; each took a hand, which they kissed with the
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utmost affection. They spoke not, but their countenances were very expressive. Mrs. Danby looked at them in silence, not knowing what to expect; yet something whispered her that a circumstance of importance remained to be communicated. A vague kind of hope, however, passed across her mind, that something relative to her brother was concealed under the air of mysterious silence observed by her children.

At length a deep sigh was heard to issue from the room I have just mentioned. Mrs. Danby started; Mr. Danby instantly entered the parlour, where, leaning on the back of a chair, he beheld a stranger who appeared in the utmost agitation of spirits. He approached Mr. Danby, and, grasping his hand with fervour, seemed to struggle for the power of utterance, which however he could not command. He sobbed aloud: Mrs. Danby felt as if inspired with fresh strength and spirits, and, disengaging herself from her children, rushed into the room. What a scene! An absence of one-and-twenty years; a residence beneath a tropical sun; various scenes of hardship, fatigue, and distress, had, it is true, produced many changes in Mr. Grey. His features had lost their former softness; and of the ruddy complexion which once glowed on the cheeks of the British youth, there were now no traces. Yet no sooner did Mrs. Danby behold the expressive eye and animated countenance of her brother, than re-
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collection rushed upon her mind, and her heart acknowledged her beloved William.

But nature was at length overcome; she could no longer sustain a conflict so very interesting. Mrs. Danby, after uttering some expressions of astonishment, gratitude, and joy, sunk almost breathless into a chair, and for a few moments remained in a state of total insensibility.

The scene was now rendered truly distressing. The children in an agony of terror surrounded their mother; Mr. Grey, in the utmost perturbation of spirits, seized the hand of his beloved sister, and, unable to speak, gazed upon her in silent agony. Mr. Danby was the only person present who had power to administer the proper restoratives. In this he was assisted by Mrs. Jane, who just at that moment entered the room with drops and water. Their efforts were soon attended with the wished-for effects. Mrs. Danby, on opening her eyes, cast them on the object whose presence had reduced her to this alarming situation. Their languor was soon effaced by an expression of joy and happiness. She threw her arms round her brother, as he stooped to embrace her, when a violent burst of tears came very seasonably to her relief.

Nothing could now equal the joy of this happy family. The children were almost wild with delight, and alternately embraced their parents, their uncle, and each other. The felicity produced by

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an event so joyful as this, could not all at once subside into a calm and tranquil happiness. By degrees, however, the tumultuous joy of which it was productive, gave place to the more serene, yet exquisite emotions of grateful delight.

After a conversation which was beyond all description interesting, Mr. Danby proposed a walk in the garden, where this happy party spent another delightful hour, till the dinner-bell summoned them to return. It was in vain that Mrs. Danby attempted to partake of the repast which was now placed before her: she employed herself in attending to others: and if for a few minutes her eyes wandered from her dear William, they soon returned again to gaze on the beloved object they had been so long deprived of. And when she looked round and contemplated the happy faces that surrounded her, the tear of gratitude and joy glistened in her eye, and her heart offered up its silent tribute of praise to that God whose goodness it loved to acknowledge, and whose power it was accustomed to trace in every event.

During breakfast, on the following morning, the children made many inquiries of their uncle respecting the manners and customs which prevailed at the different places he had visited. Fanny said she supposed he found great plenty of gold in some of those countries he had travelled to, where she fancied he had nothing to do but to get a spade and dig

dig it out of the earth. "Then you think I have brought home great abundance of wealth, my dear Fanny? but I assure you this is far from being the case: yet I have enough to gratify my wishes, and something, I hope, to reward merit, and encourage those I love in the practice of virtue and in the desire of obtaining true wisdom and real excellence. Many in my situation would, I doubt not, have amassed more wealth. However, I brought away one inestimable jewel, which I contrived to keep safe and inviolate."—"Oh! dear Sir," said Fanny, "and will you show it to us? do you carry it about with you?"—"I do, my dear Fanny, always carry it with me wherever I go."—"It must be in your pocket then, to be sure, dear uncle," rejoined the inquisitive little girl. "No, my dear niece," said Mr. Grey, "I keep it in a much safer place, for I carry it in my heart. The jewel I speak of is a conscience unstained by the crimes of injustice and oppression: nor would I barter it for all those mines where you think it is so easy to dig for and obtain the precious metal that is deemed so valuable. Nor would I tarnish the brightness of this gem for all the diamonds with which Golconda could enrich me."

Fanny blushed, and looked as if she thought she had been guilty of an impropriety. Mrs. Danby regarded her brother with a countenance strongly expressive of the warmest approbation of his conduct
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and sentiments; and Mr. Danby highly applauded Mr. Grey for the justness and rectitude he had evinced himself to be possessed of, by what he had just said.

We will now turn our attention towards the little orphan, for whom, I doubt not, my young readers have felt a degree of interest sufficient to inspire a wish of being informed of what yet remains to be related concerning him. Day after day had passed on since Dickey was so fortunate as to be received into Mr. Danby's family; and every succeeding one contributed to endear this innocent child still more to his protectors. With his attainments in learning Fanny was highly delighted, and she thought she never could do enough in order to make her favourite a better scholar.

One day when George and Dickey were spinning their tops in the play-room, the latter came running into the parlour, where Mr. and Mrs. Danby were sitting, with the strongest marks of fear imprinted on his countenance; and, hurrying to Mrs. Danby, he clung to her as fast as his little hands would permit him. This action was not performed in silence; for he cried out with much vehemence, "Oh! save me, save me; my mammy—my mammy!" Mr. Danby immediately went into the room which the child had just quitted, and perceived a woman in the yard begging from one of the servants. He then returned to the parlour, and, taking Dickey in his

his arms, told him he must look at the woman again, that he might be quite sure she was his mammy. It was not without repeated assurances from his benefactor, that the poor little boy could be convinced he was safe from being taken away by his mammy. At length his confidence in Mr. Danby prevailed over his fears; and he suffered himself to be carried into the yard where the woman stood. She no sooner cast her eyes upon the child, than she gave a great shout, clapped her hands, and endeavoured to assume an appearance of much joy, while the affrighted object of her attention clasped Mr. Danby still closer, and, turning away his face, cried out in an agony of terror, "I cannot see her: I will not see her: oh! do not go near her."

Upon this the woman began to be very clamorous, and said that her child, her dear child, had forgotten her; or that, by living with the quality, he had taken a dislike to his own mother because she was poor. Mr. Danby sternly rebuked her, and asked her, with a serious and commanding look, if she were really and truly the mother of the child then before her. She answered in the affirmative; but her looks falsified her words, and she betrayed evident marks of confusion. Mr. Danby asked her where and when the child was born; also the name and occupation of his father. None of these questions were answered without much hesitation; and on Mr. Danby's telling her that she should immediately

diately appear before a justice of the peace, she seemed to be alarmed, yet still persisted in what she had before declared—that the child was her own; but Mr. Danby was now more than ever convinced of her guilt in regard to this innocent sufferer; and taking her into the house, partly by threats and partly by promises, he drew from her a confession, of which the following is the purport:

That on passing through a field one evening, near Mr. Haywood's, a gentleman who lives about nine miles from Bath, she observed a young lad, whom she knew to be a servant of Mr. Haywood's, lying under a tree, fast asleep. On looking toward the stile, at the opposite side of the field, she saw a little boy gathering flowers, and, when she approached nearer to him, knew him to be Mr. Haywood's son. The thought instantly darted into her mind, that if she could convey away the child, he might be the means of her getting a great deal of money. This scheme was no sooner planned than executed; for catching up the child, and cramming a handkerchief into his mouth, she concealed him as well as she could under her clothes, and, striking into a by-road which led across the country, she was soon at a considerable distance from Mr. Haywood's house. When the dusk of the evening came on, she sat down under a hedge, and, stripping the child of his own clothes, contrived to cover him with some dirty rags of her own; then resuming her journey, she

made

made the best of her way to London, travelling chiefly by night, and avoiding as much as possible the great road. She had continued in London, or in the neighbourhood of it, ever since, till within the last two months, when a wish to hear something relative to Mr. Haywood's family had brought her into the west, where she had determined to remain until she had fixed upon some plan for restoring the child she had stolen to its parents, without danger to herself.

To the concluding part of this detail Mr. Danby did not give much credit; but what her intentions might have been was no longer of any importance. He took down in writing such particulars as he thought proper; and having given the woman in charge to persons that would take all necessary care of her, preparations were made for setting out early the next morning towards the house of Mr. Haywood.

Having taken leave of their family, Mr. and Mrs. Danby, with their little charge, commenced their journey soon after six o'clock; but without saying much to the young people concerning the object of it, the result being uncertain. About five o'clock in the evening they arrived at an inn, which, according to Mr. Danby's directions, could not be far from the gentleman's house to which he was going; and, having made the necessary inquiries, he was told it was only two miles distant. It was therefore determined,

mined, that Mrs. Danby and Dickey should remain where they were, while Mr. Danby proceeded to Mr. Haywood's habitation, where they were in hopes of terminating their present doubts and anxious expectations in the happiest manner. On his arrival there, and being informed that Mr. Haywood was at home, the servant opened the door of a parlour, where a gentleman and lady with two little girls were sitting, the eldest of which appeared to have been reading aloud. Mr. Danby felt extremely embarrassed from the awkwardness of his situation, and from the very interesting nature of the subject which he wished to introduce: this embarrassment was increased by the appearance of the lady, whose pale and languid countenance indicated the most extreme delicacy. His first intention was, to make a request to Mr. Haywood of speaking with him in another room; but a moment's reflection determined him, previous to this, to ask a few questions in a manner as cautious as possible. The conversation began as follows:

Mr. D. "I have the pleasure, I presume, of seeing Mr. and Mrs. Haywood."

Mr. H. "The same, Sir. Will you be so obliging as to take a chair?"

Mr. D. "I beg you will not rise, Ma'am: do, Sir, be seated. I ought to apologize for the freedom of this visit; but being particularly interested for a friend of yours, Sir, I have taken the liberty of introducing

roducing myself in a manner which the knowledge of future circumstances alone can justify."

Mr. H. "To whatever accident, Sir, we owe the favour of this visit, be assured we shall esteem it a most fortunate one."

Mr. D. "You are extremely kind, Sir. (*Bowing.*) I fear, Ma'am, I interrupt the young lady who I believe was reading."

Mrs. H. "By no means, Sir. We are at all times glad to exchange reading for a little variety of conversation: the former is always in our power; but the want of health and spirits occasions many interruptions in the latter."

Mr. D. "I am sorry to hear you lament the want of blessings so estimable; but I trust they will soon be restored to you, Ma'am."

Mrs. H. "Your kind wishes, Sir, demand my acknowledgments; but I fear they are fruitless."

Mr. H. "It appears unreasonable, Sir, that we should take this early opportunity of dwelling on subjects that lead to melancholy; but the misfortune which is ever ready to obtrude itself on our minds, is of a nature that, I fear, is not likely to be meliorated even by time. We have sustained an irreparable loss, and the grief it has occasioned has brought Mrs. Haywood into a very delicate state of health."

Mr. D. "I believe I am not entirely unacquainted with the circumstance you allude to; neither

ther am I a stranger to the feelings of a parent: yet if this trying event has been related to me in the manner in which it really happened, I think there is much room for hope."

Mrs. H. "To give way to so pleasing a delusion would only, I fear, serve to render the stings of disappointment more acute. We have been so long tortured by suspense, and have felt such poignant distress from a situation so harassing, that I feel as if totally unable to endure again a conflict from which I have suffered so much: I have therefore only to resign myself to an event which, while I continue to exist, I can never cease to lament."

Mr. H. "Had we been deprived of our dear child by death, there is no doubt but we should have reconciled ourselves to a dispensation which, although painful, we should have regarded as the decree of a wise and good Providence, whose ways are perfect rectitude, justice, and truth: but, in the present instance, we have to accuse ourselves of a degree of negligence, the recollection of which embitters every remaining comfort, and renders us dead to the enjoyments of life. The idea of the sufferings to which our innocent child may be exposed, if yet living, is constantly in our minds, and fills us with a degree of anguish which we in vain endeavour to alleviate. Indeed, Sir, we are wretched comforters to each other. For some time I endeavoured to assume an appearance of tranquillity very
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foreign

foreign from my real feelings, in hopes that it might have had a happy influence on Mrs. Haywood : but it would not do ; my own distress was increased by it without softening that of Mrs. Haywood."

Mr. D. "I should be inexpressibly concerned to add one pang to such extreme affliction, by exciting a hope that could not be realized. Yet I cannot forbear thinking that it is more than possible that I shall have the felicity of seeing you the happiest of parents."

Mr. Danby, on pronouncing these words, cast his eyes on the face of Mrs. Haywood, who regarded him with a look so expressive, so eloquent, yet withal so fearful, that he knew not what to impart, or what to withhold. After a silence of a few minutes he earnestly requested Mrs. Haywood to compose her spirits, saying, that with Mr. Haywood's permission he would accompany him for a few minutes into the garden, and then do himself the pleasure of taking tea with her. Mrs. Haywood assented in silence to this proposal, for her heart was too full to speak. The gentlemen had no sooner quitted the room than, kneeling down, and laying her head on the sofa, she gave full vent to the emotions she was no longer able to sustain ; emotions to which she had long been a stranger, because hope began to dawn upon her hitherto desponding mind. It was not so much from what Mr. Danby had said that she felt encouraged to entertain so welcome an idea, but she

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thought

thought there was something in his manner uncommonly expressive; so candid, yet so guarded, that she could not avoid thinking he knew more than he thought proper abruptly to reveal. This expectation determined her to make use of every effort in her power that would serve to strengthen her mind, and enable her to wait the event with as much fortitude as possible: in this she succeeded so well as to receive the gentlemen on their return with an air of much composure.

During their absence the happy circumstance that had occasioned Mr. Danby's visit was fully explained; and there being no longer any fear of a disappointment, Mr. Danby had dispatched his carriage for Mrs. Danby and her little friend, whose name was not Dickey, but Philip. It is not to be supposed that the delighted father could conceal the joy which had taken possession of his grateful heart, by assuming a look that did not accord with such ecstatic feelings. Mrs. Haywood's inquiring eye soon perceived the change; yet she forbore to ask the cause: her tears flowed in silence. No person had courage to speak. At length she arose, and approaching Mr. Haywood's chair, leaned against it, saying, "I believe, Mr. Haywood—I believe—" she stopped: joy flashed from his eyes. "Believe everything, my dear Frances," said he. She threw herself into his arms, and gave way to transports too exquisite to be described; but her weak frame was incapable

incapable of sustaining the happiness which thus presented itself to her enraptured view: she grew faint, and almost ceased to breathe. A carriage was heard to stop. "They are come!" exclaimed Mr. Haywood, scarcely conscious of what he said. Mrs. Haywood started, and, looking earnestly towards the door, seemed to expect that some person would enter. Mr. Danby hastily quitted the room, when Mr. Haywood seating himself by his delighted, yet almost fainting wife, said every thing he could think of that was likely to calm her agitated mind. By degrees she learned that her child was to be restored to her longing arms before the dawn of another day. In a very short time anxious expectation was lost in blissful certainty. The young heart of little Philip beat with joy, and pleasure danced in his eyes, while his parents and sisters were lavishing upon him their affectionate caresses. Mr. and Mrs. Danby were prevailed upon by this grateful and happy family to pass the two following days with them. Philip promised to write to his little friend George as soon as he was able; and spoke with much pleasure of his coming to see him at his papa's house.

Mr. and Mrs. Danby took leave of their friends with many expressions of regard, and promises of future intercourse. On their return home they had many inquiries to answer respecting their little friend who had been such a favourite at Rose Hill. Every one rejoiced at his good fortune in being

restored to his sorrowing parents ; yet each lamented the absence of one who had endeared himself to the whole family.

As soon as possible after Mr. and Mrs. Danby's return, Sophia took up her pen to relate to her friend the particulars of their journey ; but as these particulars have been already recounted, I will give the following extract only of the letter which contained them :

“ I hope you will not think I trespass upon you too much, my dear Maria, by copying two or three pages from Goldsmith's *Animated Nature*, which my father lately read to us, and which struck me very much. Dr. Goldsmith introduces the letter I am going to transcribe in the following manner :

“ ‘ The account of the dreadful earthquake which happened at Calabria in 1638 is related by the celebrated Father Kircher, as it happened while he was on his journey to visit Mount Etna, and the rest of the wonders that lie toward the south of Italy. I need scarce inform the reader, that Kircher is considered by scholars as one of the greatest prodigies of learning. ‘ Having hired a boat,’ says he, ‘ in company with four more, two friars of the order of St. Francis, and two seculars, we launched on the 24th of March from the harbour of Messina in Sicily, and arrived the same day at the promontory of Pelorus. Our destination was for the city of Euphemia in Calabria, where we had some business

‘to transact, and where we designed to tarry for some
‘time: however, Providence seemed willing to
‘cross our design; for we were obliged to continue
‘three days at Pelorus upon account of the weather;
‘and though we often put to sea, yet we were as
‘often driven back: at length, however, wearied with
‘the delay, we resolved to prosecute our voyage;
‘and although the sea seemed more than usually
‘agitated, yet we ventured forward. The gulf of
‘Charybdis, which we approached, seemed whirled
‘round in such a manner as to form a vast hollow,
‘verging to a point in the centre. Proceeding on-
‘ward, and turning my eyes to Etna, I saw it cast
‘forth large volumes of smoke of mountainous
‘sizes, which entirely covered the whole island,
‘and blotted out the very shores from my view:
‘this, together with the dreadful noise, and the
‘sulphureous stench which was strongly perceived,
‘filled me with apprehensions that some more dread-
‘ful calamity was impending. The sea itself seemed
‘to wear a very unusual appearance; those who have
‘seen a lake in a violent shower of rain, covered all
‘over with bubbles, will conceive some idea of its
‘agitations. My surprise was still increased by the
‘calmness and serenity of the weather; not a breeze,
‘not a cloud which might be supposed to put all
‘nature thus into motion: I therefore warned my
‘companions that an earthquake was approaching;
‘and, after some time, making to the shore with all
‘possible

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‘possible diligence, we landed at Tropæa, happy
‘and thankful for having escaped the threatening
‘dangers of the sea.

‘But our triumphs at land were of short duration;
‘for we had scarce arrived at the Jesuits’ college in
‘that city, when our ears were stunned with a horrid
‘sound, resembling that of an infinite number of
‘chariots driving fiercely forward, the wheels
‘rattling and the thongs cracking. Soon after this a
‘dreadful earthquake ensued; so that the whole tract
‘upon which we stood seemed to vibrate as if we
‘were in the scale of a balance that continued
‘waverings. This motion, however, soon became
‘more violent; and being no longer able to keep my
‘legs, I was thrown prostrate on the ground. In
‘the mean time the universal ruin round me re-
‘doubled my amazement. The crash of falling
‘houses, the tottering of towers, and the groans of
‘the dying, all contributed to raise my terror and de-
‘spair. On every side of me I saw nothing but a
‘scene of ruin; and danger threatening wherever I
‘should fly. I commended myself to God as my
‘last great refuge. At that hour, O how vain was
‘every sublunary happiness! wealth, honour, em-
‘pire, wisdom, all mere useless sounds, and as
‘empty as the bubbles in the deep. Just standing on
‘the threshold of eternity, nothing but God was my
‘pleasure; and the nearer I approached, I only
‘loved him the more. After some time, however,
‘finding

‘ finding that I remained unhurt amidst the general
‘ concussion, I resolved to venture for safety, and
‘ running as fast as I could, reached the shore, but
‘ almost terrified out of my reason. I did not
‘ search long here before I found the boat in which
‘ I had landed, and my companions also, whose
‘ terrors were even greater than mine. Our meeting
‘ was not of that kind where every one is desirous of
‘ telling his own happy escape; it was all silence,
‘ and a gloomy dread of impending terrors.

‘ Leaving the seat of desolation, we prosecuted
‘ our voyage along the coasts, and the next day came
‘ to Rochetta, where we landed, although the earth
‘ still continued in violent agitations. But we were
‘ scarce arrived at our inn when we were once more
‘ obliged to return to our boat; and, in about half
‘ an hour, we saw the greatest part of the town, and
‘ the inn at which we had set up, dashed to the
‘ ground, and burying all its inhabitants beneath its
‘ ruins. In this manner, proceeding onwards in
‘ our little vessel, finding no safety at land, and yet,
‘ from the smallness of our boat, having but a very
‘ dangerous continuation at sea, we at length landed
‘ at Lopizium, a castle midway between Tropæa
‘ and Euphemia, the city to which, as I said before,
‘ we were bound. Here, wherever I turned my
‘ eyes, nothing but scenes of ruin and horror ap-
‘ peared: Strombolo, though at sixty miles distance,
‘ belching forth flames in an unusual manner, and

' with a noise which I could distinctly hear; but my
 ' attention was quickly turned from more remote to
 ' contiguous danger. The rumbling sound of an
 ' approaching earthquake which we by this time
 ' were grown acquainted with, alarmed us for the
 ' consequences; it every moment seemed to grow
 ' louder and approach more near. The place on
 ' which we stood now began to shake most dread-
 ' fully, so that being unable to stand, my com-
 ' panions and I caught hold of whatever shrub grew
 ' next us, and supported ourselves in that manner.
 ' After some time, this violent paroxysm ceasing,
 ' we again stood up, in order to prosecute our
 ' voyage to Euphemia, that lay within sight. In the
 ' mean time, while we were preparing for this pur-
 ' pose, I turned my eyes towards the city, but could
 ' see only a frightful dark cloud that seemed to rest
 ' upon the place: this the more surpris'd us, as the
 ' weather was very serene: we waited, therefore,
 ' till the cloud was past away; then turning to look
 ' for the city, it was totally sunk. Wonderful to
 ' tell! nothing but a dismal and putrid lake was seen
 ' where it stood. We looked about to find some one
 ' who could tell us of its sad catastrophe, but could
 ' see none: all was become a melancholy solitude;
 ' a scene of hideous desolation.

' Thus proceeding pensively along in quest of
 ' some human being that could give us some in-
 ' formation, we at length saw a boy sitting by the
 ' shore,

‘shore, and appearing stupified with terror. Of
‘him, therefore, we inquired concerning the fate of
‘the city; but he could be got to give us no an-
‘swer: we entreated him with every expression of
‘tenderness and pity to tell us; but his senses were
‘quite wrapt up in the contemplation of the danger
‘he had escaped. We offered him some victuals,
‘but he seemed to loath the sight. We still persisted
‘in our offices of kindness; but he only pointed to
‘the place of the city, like one out of his senses; and
‘then running up into the woods, was never heard
‘of after. Such was the fate of the city of Euphe-
‘mia; and as we continued our melancholy course
‘along the shore, the whole coast, for the space of
‘two hundred miles, presented nothing but the re-
‘mains of cities, and men scattered without an ha-
‘bitation over the fields. Proceeding thus along,
‘we at length ended our distressful voyage by ar-
‘riving at Naples, after having escaped a thousand
‘dangers both by sea and land.’”

“I fear, my dear Maria, I have written a part of
this extract very ill; for I was afraid I should not
have time to finish it before the person who takes my
packet would set out; but this was a needless fear;
for I was informed about half an hour ago that he
does not go these three days: as this is the case, I
am tempted to add a few more pages from the same
work, which mamma says she wishes me to do,
conditioning with me to write it as well as I pos-
sibly

sibly can. This I have promised, and, as I have nothing particular to do at present, I will make a beginning:

“ In regard to subterraneous caverns now known, the grotto of Antiparos is the most remarkable, as well for its extent as for the beauty of its sparry incrustations. This celebrated cavern was first discovered by one Magni, an Italian traveller, about an hundred years ago, at Antiparos, an inconsiderable island of the Archipelago. The account he gives of it is long and inflated, but upon the whole amusing. ‘ Having been informed,’ says he, ‘ by the natives of Paros, that in the little island of Antiparos, which lies about two miles from the former, of a gigantic statue that was to be seen at the mouth of a cavern in that place, it was resolved that we (the French consul and himself) should pay it a visit. In pursuance of this resolution, after we had landed on the island, and walked about four miles through the midst of beautiful plains and sloping woodlands, we at length came to a little hill, on the side of which yawned a most horrid cavern, that with its gloom at first struck us with terror, and almost repressed curiosity. Recovering the first surprise, however, we entered boldly; and had not proceeded above twenty paces, when the supposed statue of the giant presented itself to our view. We quickly perceived that what the ignorant natives had been terrified at

‘ as a giant, was nothing more than a sparry concre-
‘ tion, formed by the water dropping from the roof
‘ of the cave, and by degrees hardening into a figure
‘ that their fears had formed into a monster. In-
‘ cited by this extraordinary appearance, we were
‘ induced to proceed still farther in quest of new
‘ adventures in this subterranean abode. As we
‘ proceeded, new wonders offered themselves; the
‘ spars, formed into trees and shrubs, presented a
‘ kind of petrified grove; some white, some green,
‘ and all receding in due perspective. They struck
‘ us with the more amazement, as we knew them
‘ to be mere productions of nature, who, hitherto
‘ in solitude, had in her playful moments dressed
‘ the scene as if for her own amusement.

‘ But we had as yet seen but a few of the won-
‘ ders of the place: and we were introduced as yet
‘ only into the portico of this amazing temple. In
‘ one corner of this half-illuminated recess there
‘ appeared an opening of about three feet wide,
‘ which seemed to lead to a place totally dark, and
‘ that one of the natives assured us contained nothing
‘ more than a reservoir of water. Upon this we
‘ tried by throwing down some stones, which rum-
‘ bling along the sides of the descent for some time,
‘ the sound seemed at last quashed in a bed of water.
‘ In order however to be more certain, we sent in a
‘ Levantine mariner, who, by the promise of a good
‘ reward, with a flambeau in his hand, ventured into
‘ this

‘ this narrow aperture. After continuing within it
‘ for about a quarter of an hour, he returned, carry-
‘ ing some beautiful pieces of white spar in his hand,
‘ which art could neither imitate nor equal. Upon
‘ being informed by him that the place was full of
‘ these beautiful incrustations, I ventured in once
‘ more with him, for about fifty paces, anxiously and
‘ cautiously descending by a steep and dangerous
‘ way. Finding, however, that we came to a preci-
‘ pice which led into a spacious amphitheatre, if I
‘ may so call it, still deeper than any other part, we re-
‘ turned, and being provided with a ladder, flambeaux,
‘ and other things to expedite our descent, our whole
‘ company, man by man, ventured into the same
‘ opening, and descending one after another, we at
‘ last saw ourselves all together in the most magnifi-
‘ cent part of the cavern. Our candles being now
‘ all lighted up, and the place completely illuminated,
‘ never could the eye be presented with a more
‘ glittering or a more magnificent scene. The roof
‘ all hung with solid icicles, transparent as glass,
‘ yet solid as marble. The eye could scarce reach
‘ the lofty and noble ceiling: the sides were regu-
‘ larly formed with spars; and the whole presented
‘ the idea of a magnificent theatre, illuminated with
‘ an immense profusion of lights. The floor con-
‘ sisted of solid marble; and in several places magni-
‘ ficent thrones, columns, altars, and other objects
‘ appeared, as if nature had designed to mock the
‘ curiosities

' curiosities of art. Our voices, upon speaking or
' singing, were redoubled to an astonishing loud-
' ness: and upon the firing of a gun, the noise and
' reverberations were almost deafening. In the midst
' of this grand amphitheatre rose a concretion of
' about fifteen feet high, that in some measure re-
' sembled an altar; from which taking the hint, we
' caused mass to be celebrated there. The beautiful
' columns, that shot up round the altar, appeared
' like candlesticks; and many other natural objects
' represented the customary ornaments of this
' sacrament. Below, even in this spacious grotto,
' there seemed another cavern, down which I ven-
' tured with my former mariner, and descended
' about fifty paces by means of a rope. I at last
' arrived at a small spot of level ground, where
' the bottom appeared different from that of the
' amphitheatre, being composed of soft clay, yield-
' ing to the pressure, and in which I thrust a stick to
' about six feet deep. In this, however, as above,
' numbers of the most beautiful crystals were
' formed; one of which particularly resembled a
' table. Upon our egress from this amazing cavern,
' we perceived a Greek inscription upon a rock at
' the mouth, but so obliterated by time that we could
' not read it. It seemed to import, that one Anti-
' pater, in the time of Alexander, had come thither;
' but whether he penetrated into the depths of the
' cavern, he does not think fit to inform us."

"I will

“ I will make no farther apology, my dear friend, for the size of this packet; as you can read what I have transcribed at your leisure: and I am persuaded you will be entertained with it. But I will not encroach any farther, than by adding our united and affectionate love. I hope soon to have a letter full of good news, which will give much pleasure to, dear Maria,

“ Your very sincere friend,

“ S. DANBY.”

Shortly after Miss Danby had dispatched her letter, Mr. Molineux acquainted our young gentlemen that he was going from home for a week or two; and that he hoped to see his son before his return; and asked them if they would not each give him a letter to carry to Frank. They both promised they would, and on Monday afternoon waited upon Mr. Molineux with each his letter, written in the following words:

To Master MOLINEUX.

“ DEAR FRANK, *Rose Hill, Aug. 8th.*

“ IF I were to tell you that we are at a great loss for your company, and that our sports are not so pleasant as when you were with us to partake of them, it would only be to acquaint you with what you are already sensible of. Yet on taking up my pen, this thought strikes me so forcibly that I cannot avoid expressing it. We never wished for you so much

much as on Wednesday last, when your father took us to see farmer Smith, who you know is his principal tenant. William and I spent all the morning in the hay-field, where we had fine diversion. Yet we helped the labourers notwithstanding, and the farmer said we should become excellent hay-makers with a little practice.

"The young spaniel you gave me improves much, and James says he will make a very fine dog. So that I hope by the next vacation you will find him quite a different thing from what he was when you left us. He is already become very fond of me; and so indeed he is of William; and William has taken such a fancy to him, that, had he not been a present from a friend, I certainly should have given him to him.

"Your mamma wrote you all the particulars about our new uncle, I know, for I heard her tell Sophia so. I shall be very glad when you have an opportunity of knowing him, for I'm sure you will like him exceedingly. He is teaching William and me to shoot at a mark with bows and arrows, at which he is so expert, that it would quite astonish you to see him take aim, which I never knew him to miss. He also plays cricket with us, and, though we were rather more expert at this than he was at first, yet I believe he will soon excel us greatly. Then he has so many things to tell us, that, instead of going into the play-room as we used to do in
wet

wet weather, we all beg leave to stay in the parlour, which pleases him much, for he seems to be very fond of us all. He has promised, before it is long, to give us a regular history of his life since he was nineteen years of age, at which time he first went to the East Indies; and as it was without the consent of his friends, it seems even yet to lie heavy on his mind.

"Ned Falkland went to school last week. You can't think how quiet he is grown since the adventure of the pond, &c. He was some time though before he gave over the thoughts of retaliating upon farmer Jones's sons; but I persuaded him to content himself as well as he could in this matter; 'for depend upon it, Ned,' says I, 'you will come off with the worst: your father, you know, never interferes in these cases, except it be to caution you against playing your pranks upon your unoffending neighbours. And as you have always been the aggressor, it ought to reconcile you to the mortifications you bring upon yourself.' Ned did not much relish this doctrine; however, he thought it most prudent to follow my advice. We all unite in love and good wishes. Write soon, and believe me, dear Frank,

"Your sincere friend,

"CHARLES DANBY."

To Master MOLINEUX.

"DEAR FRANK,

Rose Hill, Aug. 8th.

"As you will receive a letter from Charles at the same time that this will be given to you, I fear I cannot make mine worth your reading, as he will tell you, in a much better manner than I can do, of all that is going on here. Charles writes off hand in a minute, and has finished a sentence before I can fix upon a subject. I asked about three things that I thought of telling you of; but when I came to inquire, I found he was beforehand with me in all.

"I had no sooner finished the last sentence, than I was furnished with a subject melancholy enough. I was sitting with my elbows on the desk, and thinking if any thing new had happened in the neighbourhood, when I heard a loud knocking at the hall door, which being opened, there seemed to be a sort of a bustle; so I went to see what was the matter. I was surprised to see farmer Williams in the hall, who was come to borrow a horse, not having one of his own in the stable, to go for a doctor for Tommy, who had fallen from a very high tree, on which he had been climbing to get a bird's nest. Poor Tommy is sadly hurt. If he had not suffered greatly from his fall, I should have been very angry with him, for thinking to deprive a poor innocent bird of its nest and eggs. I hope it will be a warning to him and to other little boys not to commit such cruel actions.

"My

"My father is gone to see Tommy, and Mr. Williams is set off full gallop for the doctor.

"Charles tells me it is time to carry our letters to the Castle, and so I must now conclude myself, dear Frank,

"Your sincere and affectionate friend,

"WILLIAM DANBY."

Our young gentlemen were not long returned from Mr. Molineux's, when a letter was brought into the parlour and given to Charles, the contents of which were as follows:

To Master DANBY.

"DEAR CHARLES, \ B—, August 5th.

"I WAS determined not to write to you till I could say that I was reconciled to school laws and school discipline. To confess the truth, I was here for several days before I could keep my imagination from wandering over the scenes which it represented as so attractive. My thoughts were continually recurring to those pleasures which Liberty, sweet Liberty, dispenses to her votaries. 'But then,' said I to myself, 'pursuing my pleasures will never make me wise. And what a pretty figure I should cut in my own eyes, if, when I had attained the age of twenty-one years, I should, in contemplating the character of a booby country squire, see my own reflected! This personage whom I should have

have the honour to resemble, after he has given an accurate description of his horse's make, and of the qualities belonging to his dog, must become mute, unless the diversions of the field should be expatiated upon, and by that means give him an opportunity of displaying the whole extent of his knowledge. On the contrary, if I spend a few hours in the day with these reverend gentlemen here at my elbow, I may hope to aspire towards obtaining something that will rescue me from contempt in the opinion of the world, and, what is of more consequence to me, in the opinion of my father.' Courage then, my good boys. Nothing, it is true, can be acquired without labour; yet by persevering in the habits of industry, experience convinces me that those habits may be rendered not only easy but pleasant. For I assure you, Charles, that when the vacation commenced, I shut my books with regret, and, had it not been for the pleasure of seeing my father, would rather have pursued my studies than have returned home. However, I no sooner began to engage in the diversions of the country, than my venerable companions were forgotten. And had I been permitted to follow the mere bent of my inclination, without looking to the future, there I should probably have stayed, till my better genius had enkindled in my mind a more laudable emulation, than that of excelling in feats which the greatest blockhead in the country might have surpassed me in. However, some relaxation

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is necessary. But I fear I shall find nothing here worthy of employing my talents for events of an enterprising nature. I am afraid my inventive genius will grow languid for want of matter to work upon. I know very well what you would say, were you here; but should some pleasant occasion offer itself, I believe the dread of consequences would not deter me from exercising my skill. And indeed we had a little scheme on foot, among two or three of us here; but whether it will be put into execution, or whether the spirit will evaporate, I cannot yet say. So more of this subject hereafter.

"I hope, dear Charles, you will write very soon, and inform me of every thing that passes in the old neighbourhood, for I assure you I am greatly interested in whatever relates to my good friends in Devonshire. Give my kind love to William. Remember me very particularly to your father and mother: also to our new acquaintance, your most agreeable uncle; to your sisters, and my little friend George. When you see my father, present my duty to him, if you please, and say I shall write very soon.

"Believe me, dear Charles,

"Your sincere friend,

"E. F."

Breakfast was scarcely concluded on the following morning, when a letter was brought in, directed for Mr.

Mr. Grey; who, after casting his eye over the contents, gave it to Charles, desiring him to read it aloud, which he did in the following words:

To WILLIAM GREY, *Esq.*

" East Field, August 5.

" MY EVER DEAR FRIEND,

" THE surprise which I experienced on reading the most welcome letter of my good Mr. Danby, could be equalled by nothing but the pleasure which accompanied it. Accept, my dear old school-fellow and early companion, of as sincere congratulations as ever passed from the heart of one friend to another. Sorry I am that I cannot adopt a method more congenial to my feelings than this, of bidding you welcome to your native country. But this gout is a sad spoiler of pleasure, and deranges many pleasant schemes. Could I have followed the dictates of my inclination, I should instantly have mounted my horse, and have set out on the pleasantest journey I ever yet took; provided no cross accident retarded my progress, and that I had the happiness of seeing you safe and well at the conclusion of it. This I may safely assert, because, when I had the felicity of conducting my dear Maria to her present home, I could not be said to take a previous journey, as she had resided for three years before that period in our neighbourhood. But, situated as I am at present, a journey of seventy miles would be an undertaking quite impracticable.

practicable. And little as this confinement accords with the ardour of my wishes, there is no remedy. I am under the dominion of an inflexible master; who, while he exacts the strictest obedience, must be humoured and indulged like a wayward and spoiled child. Yet, methinks, I could hereafter have yielded myself a willing victim to his power, if at this time I had been a free man. But to you, my friend, who I hope are subject to none of these impediments, who have passed from climate to climate, and have doubtless encountered many inconveniences by sea and land, such a journey as this, through a fine champaign country, will not, I trust, be an obstacle to prevent your coming to see an old friend, who ardently longs to welcome you to his habitation. You will find that habitation very much the same as when in our youthful days we were there accustomed to pass together the careless hours. Our common enemy has, to be sure, been busy with most of its former inhabitants; but these are calamities to which we must submit. And if you meet with new faces, be assured there are many hearts in this mansion prepared to give you a reception not unworthy the friendship which its master feels for you.

But Maria is quite impatient to see you, and wishes she were authorized to busy herself in preparing for the arrival of the most welcome guests we could possibly receive. I say guests; for it is our united
and

and earnest request that Mr. and Mrs. Danby, with as many of their young people as they can conveniently bring with them, will do us the favour to accompany you. But I will not enlarge on this subject, as Maria writes to Mrs. Danby herself,

“Here is my son James, who has now attained his twelfth year, would fit

‘From eve to morn, from morn to dewy eve,
‘A summer’s day,’

to hear me recount the sports and pastimes of our early years. Nor is Lucy less attentive to the recital; and even our little Maria catches the animating glow, and slips out the question of, ‘Papa, when will you tell us more about Mr. Grey?’ Your old apartment still retains the very same appearance as when you were its occasional inhabitant. The blue damask bed has been as carefully preserved against the assaults of time as possible. Not a chair has been moved from its place; and the desk at which you used to write, preserves its former station. In one of its most retired drawers I can show you various papers in your own hand-writing, many of which were written five-and-twenty years ago. Were I to tell you how often I have sat at this desk, and give you a history of my meditations, my regrets—shall I say my heart-piercing sorrows?—it would not be a letter I should write, but a volume. But away with mournful reflections. My dear long-

lost, long-lamented friend, will, I hope, soon repay me for every anxious thought by his much wished-for society.

“The little cottage at the end of the avenue is still standing: but, alas! its worthy inhabitants have long since been united to the dust from whence they sprang. Yet there are several hereabouts who are still living, whom you will be glad to see, and who will be rejoiced to see you; none, I believe, more so than our worthy master, good old Geoffry, who still superintends the school, though incapable of devoting so much of his time to it as formerly. His nephew is his principal assistant; and I think the school is in nearly as flourishing a state as when you and I were his pupils. I have dispatched a message to the old gentleman, requesting the favour of his company this evening; but I have reserved to myself the pleasure of acquainting him with your return.

“And when I am speaking of old friends who will meet you with a smiling countenance and a rejoicing heart, it would be great injustice to forget poor Margaret, the good old dairy-woman, who has supplied us with so many plentiful repasts of curds and cream, out of her nice wooden bowls, which in whiteness rivalled what they contained. The old creature has survived the most of her family, and now lives at a little tenement within a quarter of a mile of us. She was here this morning, about an hour after I received Mr. Danby's letter. I sent for her
into

into the parlour. 'Margaret,' said I, 'would it give you any pleasure to see an old friend?'—'Ah, please your honour, I hope I shall not live any longer than while I can take pleasure in that.'—'Who was it that used to come frequently to your cottage with me, between twenty and thirty years ago, to eat curds and cream?'—She shook her head. 'Ah, Sir! that is a question which brings melancholy thoughts into my mind. I don't know who it is your honour means, but I know who it is I think of. God orders all things for the best. Poor, dear, sweet young gentleman! Whatever sad mischance betided him here, I hope all will be well hereafter.'—'Do not despair, my good Margaret; all may yet be well here too.'—'What means my dear master? Sure he would not deceive his poor old servant? But it is not possible that Mr. Billy can——' She stopt: her lips trembled; and she was unable to finish the sentence. 'It is possible, my good Margaret; your favourite is now safe and well with his sister in Devonshire.' She dropped upon her aged knees; and

'—— One bright gleam of setting life
'Shone on her evening hours.'

"I am quite impatient till you gladden us all by your presence. I feel a peculiar pleasure in thinking of the various objects you will recognise, which surround us here, and which were once so familiar. My propensity

for indulging a fondness for local attachments has been an increasing one; and I dare say you will derive pleasure also from the contemplation of objects that will recall to your mind past events. Among these, your favourite clump of trees will, I think, claim your notice, under whose shade

‘Our listless lengths at noontide would we stretch,
‘And pore upon the brook that babbles by.’

These trees greatly offended a modern man of taste who was here some time ago, and who piques himself greatly on being a connoisseur in laying out grounds in an elegant style, &c. One day when we were taking a walk through the meadows, he said, ‘I can’t conceive, Mr. Davenport, what induces you to permit those insufferable trees to occupy a place in your grounds, and intercept your prospect. Were they at my disposal, how soon I should employ the ax to level their leafy honours with the earth!’—‘I have very old-fashioned notions,’ I replied; ‘and every stroke of the ax given to my venerable companions (for as such I regard them) would seem as if it was inflicting a wound upon me also. I could not see a branch lopped from these trees, without feeling as if I had lost something that belonged to a friend, and that ought to be preserved. I have no wish to become a profelyte to modern manners and modern maxims; and I am sure you will say I am very little influenced by them, when

when I profess myself attached not only to my old friends, but to whatever relates to them, and serves to remind me of them when absent. Not that I stand in need of such remembrancers, I hope; too often for my own peace do I call to mind the friend with whom, under the shade of these trees, I have spent many a pleasant hour. Yet, methinks, I would not repress one thought that relates to a subject, which, though melancholy, has something in it unspeakably interesting.' I gave over speaking, and, as my companion was silent also, I imagined he was thinking intently on what I had been saying; I looked up to see if his countenance was expressive of this contemplative turn, when, seeming to recollect himself, he instantly said, 'I beg ten thousand pardons, Sir; I really lost a part of what you were saying; but I think you was speaking of a friend who is very fond of trees: on the contrary, I was just thinking, that by their removal, and some other alterations, this might really be made a very delightful place.' I felt my indignation rising, but I endeavoured to suppress it. We cannot, said I to myself, expect figs from thistles.

"When I took up my pen I had no thoughts of extending my letter to half this length; but one thing led on to another, before I was aware of having proceeded so far. However, I will now take my leave, and send off this letter, as I would not on any account have it meet with the delay of a post.

As Mrs. D. writes by the same conveyance, I leave her to insert her own remembrances.

"Adieu! my dearest friend. Soon, very soon, I hope to tell you in person how much I am

"Your affectionate and unalterable friend,

"EDWARD DAVENPORT."

"P. S. You will be good enough to present my very best thanks to our common friend, Mr. Danby, for his joy-inspiring letter. Tell him also, that I will not ensure him and his lady a welcome reception from the whole of my family, if they do not come accompanied by a tolerable number of the younger part of theirs. I assure you we have room enough for all, both in our hearts and home."

This letter proved a very interesting one to our little circle; and it was easy to perceive by the countenances of the young people what was passing in their minds.

Mr. Grey expressed much impatience to see his old friend, to whom he had been warmly attached almost from infancy; and, addressing himself to Mr. Danby and his sister, said, he hoped they would have no objection to take an early opportunity of paying Mr. and Mrs. Davenport a visit. This proposal met with a ready compliance from Mr. and Mrs. Danby, as they could not think of preventing

Mr.

Mr. Grey from going to East Field, or of losing the society of a guest whose presence and conversation were so delightful to them. Mrs. Danby immediately turned to the children, saying, "I am sure, my dears, you will cheerfully acquiesce with whatever plan is fixed upon in regard to your accepting the kind invitation we have received for you. It is not possible that you should all go; but I am certain that those who stay at home will have great pleasure in reflecting on the happiness which the others enjoy: they will also rest assured, that, when an opportunity occurs of gratifying them, they will be remembered in their turn." The children with one voice assured their mamma, that whatever should be determined upon by their parents and uncle would be quite pleasing to them.

This point being amicably adjusted, the children retired for the night; after which this subject was further discussed: and it was determined, that application should be made to Mr. Oswald to take Charles and William entirely under his care; that George should be left with Mrs. Jane; and the two girls should accompany Mr. and Mrs. Danby and Mr. Grey to East Field. On the morning of the following day Mr. Danby took a walk with his sons to the house of their worthy tutor, who with great pleasure agreed to the proposal made by that gentleman, of placing his boys more immediately under his care. Soon after Mr. Danby's return, their

departure was fixed upon for the following Wednesday, and a letter was dispatched to East Field, to inform their friends of their intention. Sophia and Fanny were of course greatly pleased with the thoughts of their approaching journey; yet as their brothers could not be admitted of the party, it was some alloy to their happiness. But Charles and William both assured their sisters that they were quite pleased with the idea of going to Mr. Oswald's; and that if Sophia would write them an account of all that was passing at Mr. Davenport's, it would make them ample amends for not being actually there.

The evening of this day being remarkably fine, the gentlemen took a ride to visit a friend, who resided at a village a few miles distant from Rose Hill; the boys were engaged in their gardens; and Mrs. Danby proposed a walk to the young ladies, to which they assented with much pleasure. The charming scenes which every where surrounded them, added to the sprightliness of their conversation, served to beguile the time, and make their walk appear shorter than it really was: nor had they, till Fanny complained of being weary, entertained a thought of returning home.

Mrs. Danby, on recollecting the distance they were now at from Rose Hill, began to fear her daughters would be too much fatigued without taking some rest previous to their return. On
casting

casting her eyes towards a neat little cottage, situated just across the field they were in, she judged it most expedient to repair thither, and request permission to take a little rest before they proceeded homewards. On approaching the door of this humble habitation, their ears were struck with the sound of a female voice, which in tremulous yet not indistinct accents pronounced the following words, being the latter part of the 16th Psalm:

“The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night-season. I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

Mrs. Danby's curiosity was strongly excited to know something of the inhabitants of this cottage, in whose favour she felt herself greatly prepossessed. She knocked gently at the door, which was instantly opened by a little girl, apparently about ten years of age: she had her knitting in her hand, and, by her diligence, seemed to think that, although interrupted, her work, if possible, must continue to advance.

Near the entrance sat a very decent-looking woman, who was engaged in the same employment with her daughter: and on the side of the room farthest from the door, in an elbow-chair, and supported by pillows, was placed a young girl, whose appearance bespoke her to be in the last stage of a consumption. Her pallid cheek and emaciated form exhibited every symptom of an approaching dissolution. This young sufferer did not appear to be more than fourteen years of age. A table was placed before her, on which lay a Bible; therefore Mrs. Danby immediately concluded, that it was from the lips of this unhappy child that the sacred words they had just heard proceeded.

On entering the cottage, Mrs. Danby apologized to the good woman already mentioned, for this abrupt visit; at the same time acquainting her with the motive which had induced her to ask permission for herself and daughters to remain for a short time under her roof. Mary appeared highly gratified with the opportunity which accident had furnished her with, of receiving such guests, but lamented that her little dwelling was so unsuitable to their quality; then wiping her nicely-scoured chairs with her clean apron, placed one for each of her visitors with great alacrity.

The melancholy situation of the young invalid was highly interesting to Mrs. Danby and her daughters, who surveyed her with looks expressive of the most lively

lively concern. To behold so young a person suffering under the dominion of a malady so dreadful, was a circumstance in itself sufficient to excite pity and compassion in the heart of any one not totally insensible to the afflictions of others. To heighten that compassion there was something in the countenance and manner of this poor girl which bespoke a mind superior to her station and her years. There was something of submission, of acquiescence, of patience under suffering, that excited in Mrs. Danby both surprise and admiration. The conversation which now took place I will give to my young readers in the form of dialogue.

Mrs. D. "I am extremely sorry to see this little girl in so bad a state of health; for from her appearance I can't help fearing she is very ill. Is she your daughter, my good friend?"

Mary. "Yes, Madam; she is my eldest daughter, and as good a child as ever poor parent was blest with; and so indeed is little Sally too; for she does all she can to help me, and would work night and day, so that she could get any thing to do poor Jenny any good."

Mrs. D. "How long has she been ill?"

Mary. "Seven months, Madam; in all which time I never knew her to be impatient or fretful under the heavy affliction which it has pleased God to lay upon her; but was always making the best of it, trying to comfort me and her little sister, telling

us that if she recovered, she would do all she could to make us amends for the trouble she had given us; but that if she should die, God would take her to himself, and make her happy for ever."

Mrs. D. "Have you no husband living?"

Mary. "Alas! no, Madam; there was the beginning of all my sorrows. You must know, Madam, that my husband followed the sea in his younger days; but when we married, he laid out his earnings to stock a little farm about three miles from this place, where we lived for ten years; but some disagreement happening between him and our landlord, we left the farm and came to this, where things prospered better with us than before: but, alack-a-day! sad and heavy calamities were coming upon us. It will be just twelve months the fifth of next August since my poor husband fell ill, and, in spite of all that could be done for him, grew worse and worse, till it pleased God to call him out of this world; then he was hardly cold in his grave, as I may say, before poor Jenny took this illness, which has been grief upon grief: but God knows what is best for us all; and if I have taken things too much to heart, I trust in his mercy for forgiveness. To be sure I have great comforts still left; for my son is sixteen years old, and through his means I have been able to keep our farm; and we want but another half guinea to make up the rent which will

be due to-morrow fortnight. But I tire you, Madam, with my long story."

Mrs. D. "By no means, I assure you; for I am truly sorry for your misfortunes; and should be extremely happy could I afford your dear child any relief."

Mary. "God bless you, Madam, and all your worthy family! The blessing of the poor will follow you wherever you go: but haply you may wish to send to the Hill for the chaise; and if so, little Sally here will run thither in a twinkling."

(Sally no sooner heard these words pronounced by her mother, than she laid down her knitting, and made Mrs. Danby a low courtesy, as much as to say she was quite ready to depart.)

Mrs. D. "You are very kind; but we shall prefer walking. So you know me then, my good friend?"

Mary. "Know you, Madam! Ah! bless your worthy heart; if I had been but as many days as I have been years at this place, I could not but have known Squire and Madam Danby. Why, there's poor Jonathan that works at the mill often says he never closes his eyes without praying for you and yours; for it was your goodness, under the blessing of God, that was the means of setting him on his legs again. Then here's poor old Samuel and Deborah at the end of our lane, good and worthy couple as they are, must have gone to the parish, had it

not

not been for you, long before this. Often and often my poor husband used to say, that he never looked into your seat at church without being edified; for even the young misses here, and their brothers, were so proper in their behaviour always, that it did his heart good to look at them: not giggling and whispering, as some others would be, and minding their amusements in the house of God."

Mrs. D. "That would be a sad thing indeed; better they should not appear there at all, than not behave with proper seriousness; yet to prohibit young persons from going to a place of worship, because they would not pay a proper attention to the duties they are required to perform there, is so dreadful a thing, that I cannot bear to dwell on the idea even for a moment."

Mary. "I wish every one were like you, then we poor people would see a better example set by the gentlefolks. I hope I am not uncharitable in saying that there are some ladies who come to our church that are very proud and disdainful, if looks may be minded. I am sure I have often wondered, after hearing all the fine things our good clergyman has said, how they could answer it to their own consciences to look so proudly on their honest and industrious neighbours, who, though plain spoken, and dressed in coarse garments, might be of as much account in the sight of God, as those who were grandly dressed and more polite."

Mrs.

Mrs. D. "It is a sad thing that worthy characters should be overlooked because met with in humble life. This I fear is too often the case, yet I hope not generally so. But I wish I could be the means of procuring some relief to my little suffering friend here. Do you feel any pain, my dear?"

Jenny. "Not now, Madam; but sometimes I have a great deal of pain in my side; and when my cough is troublesome it mostly brings it on."

Mrs. D. "Have you had any advice for her?"

Mary. "Oh, yes! Doctor Green was very good in attending her; but I can't say she was much the better for any thing she took. He was here this day was a week; but Jenny desired he would not give her any more physic."

Mrs. D. "But why, my dear, would you not be willing to take what Mr. Green might wish to order for you? There can be no doubt but he would intend it for your good; and I dare say you have no reason to think he was without hope of your receiving benefit from his prescription."

Jenny. "It was because I was almost sure he had no hope, that made me unwilling to put my poor mother to any farther expence. If I could but see my dear mother, and brother, and sister, reconciled to part with me, I should feel very happy; except that sometimes I can't help grieving that I am to be with them no longer; but I tell them I hope I am
going

going to the place where my poor dear father is, and where all good and dutiful children are taken to; for though I have not been near as good as I ought, yet I have such a trust in God's mercy, that I feel no uneasiness about dying, because I know God will lead me safely through the dark valley of the shadow of death."

Mrs. D. "Tell me, my worthy neighbour, where did your excellent child acquire such fortitude and resignation? where, at her early years, could she learn a lesson which even age and wisdom have sometimes studied with less success?"

Mary. "From the word of God: her Bible is her delight."

Mrs. Danby, perceiving that her daughters were extremely affected by the conversation of Jenny and her mother, thought it better not to prolong her visit; taking an affectionate leave therefore of this little family, she promised to see them again very soon. Sophia and Fanny walked on arm in arm before their mother. *Mrs. Danby*, proceeding at some little distance, could not forbear giving way to the following reflections: "Ye men of genius, of learning, and of science! ye luminaries of the age! would ye could behold the scene which I have just contemplated! Does not the conduct of this child, young as she is, nurtured in ignorance, and brought up in obscurity, shine with resplendent brightness? In ignorance did I say? No; not in ignorance;

for has not her mind been enlightened by the glorious truths of the everlasting gospel? has she not for her imitation an example of the most perfect obedience, benevolence, and love, displayed in the life and character of our blessed Redeemer, the Saviour of men? Does she not, in obeying his laws, in imbibing his pure and perfect precepts, attain to a degree of knowledge and virtue, without which all learning is vain, genius a shadow, and science a dream? Happy child! thou indeed hast chosen that safe and secure path which will conduct thee to the realms of unfading bliss; even into the presence of God and his holy angels. Methinks I view thee at this moment as if falling into a sweet and gentle sleep; closing thine eyes on this world, and opening them in the regions beyond the grave; there the disembodied soul, freed from the incumbrances of mortality, shall delight in its new powers; there it shall expand itself without restraint, triumphing in its new existence, and rejoicing that it has escaped from that prison where chains and darkness, sorrow and death, held in captivity those noble powers now employed in praising the uncreated Source of light and life; the pure and exhaustless Fountain of everlasting bliss."

Such were the reflections which occupied the mind of Mrs. Danby, till they were interrupted by the approach of her two eldest sons, who thinking their mother and sisters were absent longer than usual,

usual, and knowing the way they had taken, came out to meet them. They had not been long at home before the gentlemen joined them; and after the young people retired to bed, Mrs. Danby related the particulars of her visit at the cottage. As Mr. Green was their family apothecary, Mrs. Danby said she would endeavour to see him in the morning; for although she regarded the case of his young patient as an hopeless one, yet she had a great desire to speak to him on the subject.

Soon after supper was ended, Mr. Danby repaired to the library, in order to settle some accounts which he wished to have in readiness against the ensuing day. Mr. Grey had appeared unusually thoughtful during the whole of the evening; and after Mr. Danby quitted the room, he seemed as if struggling with some secret uneasiness which he was unable either to conceal or communicate: he arose from his seat; walked for some time backwards and forwards with evident marks of an agitated mind; at length taking a chair, and seating himself near Mrs. Danby, he thus addressed her: "There is one question, my dear sister," said he, "which I have long wished to ask, but which is of so interesting a nature that I have wanted courage to make the inquiry; yet tell me—am I indeed that wretched, that ungrateful, that unnatural son, who was the means of shortening the existence of those who gave me being? those honoured parents who watched over
my

my infancy with such unceasing tenderness; whose delight I was; yet—" Here the voice of Mr. Grey was rendered inarticulate by the violence of his emotions; the idea which presented itself to his imagination seemed almost insupportable. Mrs. Danby, greatly affected by the situation in which she beheld her brother, hastened to sooth and compose his spirits by such assurances as were most calculated to produce the desired effect. This was a relief she had it in her power to impart, without infringing the sacred laws of truth; for great as were the sufferings she had beheld her parents experience, she had no reason to apprehend that their lives were shortened by the calamity which had been brought upon them; for the supports of religion, and the comfort they derived from the attentions of herself and her family, greatly alleviated the severity of their affliction. Mrs. Danby had the pleasure to behold the happy effects which her conversation produced, and when they parted for the night, she had every reason to hope that the mind of her brother was in a more serene state than it had been since the commencement of his misfortunes.

The following morning Mrs. Danby paid an early visit to Mr. Green, who informed her that no human art could be of any avail in the case of her little friend; for that her disorder had long ago exhibited symptoms which must destroy every glimmering of hope. This account was no more than
what

what Mrs. Danby expected to receive; and she scarcely thought herself justified in wishing to prolong the existence of one who already appeared to have conquered the bitterness of death, and who seemed to have a foretaste of the felicity prepared for her in a better world.

As soon as this amiable woman returned home, she collected a few things which she thought might be acceptable to the worthy cottagers, among which was a plentiful supply of fruit for Jenny. Sophia and Fanny would gladly have accompanied their mother in the visit she intended to pay to their new friends; but Mrs. Danby, not thinking proper to gratify their request, gave them some employment preparatory to their intended journey, which was fixed upon for the day but one following: she therefore set out for the cottage, accompanied by a maid servant only. Jenny was greatly pleased on seeing her visitor, and found herself much refreshed by the repast prepared for her. Mrs. Danby told her she had given strict orders that she should be supplied with as much fruit as she chose to eat, or at least as would be good for her, during her absence. The grateful little girl was very sensible of this kindness, and assured Mrs. Danby she could never be unmindful of her goodness, were it possible that her life should be prolonged far beyond the time it was likely to be continued.

At length the much wished-for day arrived,
when

when our happy party were to commence the journey which had in prospect yielded the two sisters so much delight: they arose with the lark, nor were their spirits dissimilar to the gaiety of that sweet songster. Sometimes, indeed, a thought would pass across their minds shaded with melancholy: but the brilliancy of the morning tinging every object with that unsullied beauty which no pen can paint, no pencil imitate; the melody which, from a thousand different sources, filled the air, and animated all nature; the freshness of the passing breeze, dispensing sweets, gathered from the shrubs and flowers just opening to the sun; and, perhaps, what was more than all, the gay scenes which hope and expectation paint in such glowing colours to the youthful mind, gilding the coming hours with those delightful visions which Fancy, in her productive moments, presents to the imagination, assisted in banishing from the minds of our young travellers the regret which the thoughts of poor Jenny, and the concern of parting with their brothers, had a tendency to produce.

Mr. Danby had for some years past kept a plain neat chaise for the convenience of Mrs. Danby and her daughters, which he was enabled to do at a very small expence, as he avoided every appearance of show and parade. In this carriage Mrs. Danby and the young ladies were safely conveyed to East Field, attended

attended by the gentlemen on horseback. Sophia had promised her brothers to keep a journal of every transaction during her absence, which journal was to be occasionally transmitted into Devonshire; and in order that she might devote as much time as possible to this purpose, she excused herself from writing as usual to her friend Miss Molineux, sensible that her brothers had the first claim to her attention. With the utmost alacrity she took up her pen on the evening of the day she left home, and thus addressed herself to her beloved Charles and William:

“MY DEAREST BROTHERS,

“I COULD not be satisfied to go to rest, without first beginning the agreeable task which I shall take so much pleasure in performing. We had a most charming journey to this place, and Fanny was so delighted with every thing she saw, had so many questions to ask, and so many remarks to make, that I was afraid she would almost tire mamma. We seldom passed a gentleman's house that struck her as being handsome, or pleasantly situated, but she expressed a wish to know who lived in it, forgetting what we repeatedly told her, that mamma was quite a stranger to the inhabitants of the country through which we were passing: but mamma was very much pleased to see her admire the prospects as we went along. ‘Oh, mamma!—see, Sophia!’ she kept saying; ‘do look at those fields; how pleasant

pleasant it must be to walk in them! Are not those hills very high? how grand they appear! Then that valley is so nice and shady; and see how pretty the water looks, shining through the trees.' But, my dear brothers, I am desired by my mamma to go and take some refreshment, which will be very acceptable to me after my journey: so I must bid you adieu for the present: to-morrow I hope to resume my pen at East Field, where we expect to arrive about three o'clock. Good night, my dear brothers.

" East Field, Thursday Evening.

" I have now the pleasure to acquaint my dear Charles and William that we arrived here, safe and well, a little before three o'clock; so you find we were very exact to the time appointed. As my papa and uncle were about a quarter of an hour before us, we were not present at the meeting between the two gentlemen, who had so long been separated from each other. I am sure I need not say it was a very joyful one.

" The approach to Mr. Davenport's house is by a long and shady avenue, which we no sooner entered than we alighted from the carriage, Mrs. Davenport and the two young ladies being there ready to receive us. Lucy seems to be a very good-humoured engaging girl, and appears to be quite happy at the thoughts of having Fanny and me for companions. Then Maria is a dear little creature.

I wish George had been with us, he would have made such a nice playfellow for her! But what signifies wishing? there would be no end to that! yet I can't help thinking how happy we should all be together, for I know you would be quite fond of James Davenport; he likes just the same kind of amusements that you, my dear brothers, are partial to: then I can perceive already that he is very compassionate, and not only avoids hurting dumb animals, but seems to study every thing that will make them happy. James and Lucy, and Fanny and I, were in the garden for near two hours this evening, and they showed us a great many birds' nests, but would not on any account give the least alarm to the old birds.

"East Field is not at all like Rose Hill; to-morrow I will try to give you some description of it, but must now lay down my pen. I told mamma that I wished to come up stairs when Fanny did, as I intended to write a little bit before I went to bed; but it is now so dark that I can scarcely see to make a letter, so I will only say good night, dear brothers.

"Friday.

"On looking over the few lines I had written last night, I was quite ashamed, my dear brothers, to find that I had omitted mentioning the kind reception we met with from Mr. and Mrs. Davenport. My young companions engrossed my thoughts so much,

much, that my pen imperceptibly led me to give you some account of them, before I mentioned those who had the first claim to my attention.

“I think I never saw any one whose countenance pleased me more than Mr. Davenport’s, even at the first view; he has so much good humour in his looks; then his manners are so kind, so cheerful, and obliging, that I think every one who sees him must conclude that he has a most friendly heart. And indeed Mrs. Davenport is also extremely pleasing to strangers; yet, from having rather less freedom in her manners, I believe it requires a little more time to become acquainted with her. As to Mr. Davenport, he is so open-hearted, so frank, and unaffected, that I should think no one could be an hour in his company and not feel an affection for him. When mamma sees this sentence, I don’t know whether she will not tell me I express myself like a very young writer, governed by notions that will be likely to lead me into errors and inconveniencies. However, in the present instance, I am persuaded she will say I am right. But then it was not from my own observation only that I formed my opinion, for I had heard much of Mr. Davenport’s good qualities before I came hither, although I had little or no recollection of his person till I had the pleasure of seeing him in his own house. He is much afflicted with the gout, but is at present able

to walk about the grounds without any great inconvenience.

“ I mentioned before, that the approach to East Field is by a long and shady avenue ; on entering which, you have a full view of the house, which has the appearance of ancient grandeur ; and though it seems a little gloomy, yet the vines that cover the walls afford such a freshness, and appear so verdant and rural, that you cannot help thinking it would be a great pity to remove them. The avenue is on a gentle ascent, of which you attain the summit a few yards before you reach the house, when some delightful open ground appears on each side, adorned by clumps of trees, and terminated by a thick wood. Behind the house is a shrubbery, much more extensive than ours, from which you enter upon some of the ground I have just mentioned, which is adorned by the finest piece of water I ever saw. You never beheld any thing more verdant than its banks ; and every object appeared so rural and so inviting, that I thought I could have sat there the whole day. But neither James nor Lucy are yet permitted to visit this pleasant place, without leave from their parents, when some careful person always attends them, to prevent any accident. Adjoining the shrubbery are some very good gardens, but less calculated for ornament than use. The apartments are spacious and convenient, and, if more light were admitted, I should say they were pleasant ; but as the windows
are

are old-fashioned, and shaded with vines, the rooms are certainly rather too dark; yet I should think it a pity to remove any of the branches which contribute to render them so, for, on a warm day, their shade is very refreshing and delightful. There is a great abundance of fruit here, so we have no cause to regret being absent from Rose Hill on that account.

“And now, my dear brothers, I must bid you adieu for the present, for Mrs. Davenport is so good as to say she will permit me to assist Lucy in some preparations which are making for a great entertainment this evening; but I am sure that if I acquit myself properly in any little undertaking they are good enough to favour me with, it will be entirely owing to the great care our dear mamma has taken to instruct me in whatever she thought it was proper I should learn. Once more, dear brothers, farewell.

“*Saturday.*

“Now, my dear Charles and William, I again take up my pen to perform my promise, and tell you how happy we were yesterday. You must know that, to celebrate my uncle’s arrival, Mr. Davenport invited all his tenants and their families to dine at his house yesterday. Never surely was there a happier set of people. Several of them recollected my uncle, and expressed their joy at his return in a manner which affected us all. You may be certain poor old Margaret was not forgotten; Mr. Daven-

port insisted on her being placed next to the wife of his principal tenant, who performed the honours of the table. There were some very pretty little boys and girls, who all said they had never been so happy in their whole lives before. Lucy and I had great pleasure in showing them the gardens, and in talking to them, before dinner was ready. Mamma has given me leave to purchase some little books for them, as soon as I have an opportunity, and Lucy is to assist me in choosing and distributing them; for I should have told you, there is a shop in the neighbourhood that has all Newbery's books as soon as they are published at St. Paul's Church-yard.

"In the evening we had a large company of gentlemen and ladies, who were invited to drink tea and sup; this company consisted chiefly of those friends of Mr. Davenport who had any knowledge of my mamma and uncle. You may be sure the good old preceptor of my uncle was one of the guests. It is very affecting to see an old man shed tears; no wonder that mine flowed so copiously, when I beheld those of this good old gentleman trickling down his face. There were several young people present, about our own ages, and some who were grown up to be men and women.

"As soon as tea was over, we were very agreeably surprised to hear music strike up in the hall. We danced till about ten o'clock, when the supper-bell summoned

summoned us into another apartment, where a very handsome entertainment was provided, and with the dessert came a variety of little puzzles and devices, prepared by Mrs. Davenport for the amusement of her young visitors. Nothing was wanting to make me completely happy, but the presence of my dear brothers; however, I hope you will both have an opportunity, before it is long, of seeing this agreeable place, and its still more agreeable inhabitants. I often think when I look at Mr. and Mrs. Davenport, and our good parents and uncle, what a charming thing it is to be amiable and to be beloved. If these dear friends were not each of them possessed of dispositions kind and good, it would not be possible that they should enjoy such happiness in the society of each other. May we, my dear brothers, as we grow up, endeavour to behave so as to obtain the friendship and esteem of those with whom we may be connected! I have often heard it said, that when people are advanced in years, they never enjoy so much pleasure from attachments formed late in life, as they do from those which had taken place in their younger days. But to effect this, virtuous habits and worthy sentiments must be acquired in youth; for you know good old people could never look back with pleasure on the earlier part of their lives, unless they could call to mind actions that bespoke a good and worthy mind. Let us, my dear brothers, keep

this in remembrance, and carefully avoid doing any thing while we are young, that will reproach us in future. We shall then, no doubt, find friends, in whose society we shall enjoy the same pleasure, and in whose friendship we shall place the same confidence, as that which now subsists between Mr. and Mrs. Davenport, and our dear parents and uncle.

"Lucy is come to take me from my pen; she says she has other employment for me. What a pleasure it is to be able to do something for such obliging friends! for though my services are small, yet I can show by a willing temper, and a cheerful compliance with what is proposed, that it is only for want of ability that I do not do more. Thanks to dear mamma for all!

"Farewell, dear brothers, till to-morrow, when I believe I shall close this long letter.

"Sunday.

"We returned from church about half an hour ago, and after writing down what I could remember of the sermon, I desired mamma would give me leave to finish the remaining part of my letter, which she readily consented to. When at church, I could not avoid thinking of our good and revered friend, with whom you now are. It would be very presumptuous in me, to be sure, to make remarks and draw comparisons, as my knowledge and experience are so small; however, I could not help wishing that the clergyman whom we heard at this church

was

was more like good Mr. Oswald. You know as well as I what pains he takes to send away his hearers better than they were when they came; and how much he endeavours to set them an example of true piety, by his own devout manner of performing the service. How much more edifying it must be to a congregation, where the clergyman seems to speak from his heart, than when he performs the duties of his profession in a hasty and careless manner!

“The church stands in the middle of a very pretty little village, about two miles from East Field. When service was over, several ladies and gentlemen came up to Mr. Davenport’s pew, and, as I found afterwards, requested they might be introduced to our family; for it seems the circumstance of my uncle’s return to his friends is quite an interesting one to the whole neighbourhood. Mrs. Davenport says there is no knowing when our engagements will have an end.

“I have been taking a survey of the foregoing pages, my dear brothers, and feel but half satisfied with the review, for I fear they will appear trifling and unentertaining. However, as they carry with them the intelligence of our being well and happy, I know they will not be unacceptable. But I have been guilty of one omission, for which I can hardly excuse myself; I mean that of having scarcely once mentioned dear little George. Sweet fellow! I’m

sure I have often thought of him; give him many kisses for me, and tell him I long to see him, and hear his innocent prattle. I must also request you will present my grateful regards to Mr. Oswald, and my kind respects to Mrs. Jane. When you see any of Mr. Molineux's family, do not forget to assure them I shall never be unmindful of their kind attentions: in all these remembrances, Fanny desires to unite. You will also be so good as to give our respects to any of our kind neighbours who are so obliging as to inquire about us.

"We are anxiously expecting a letter from you every post, which I hope will bring a good account of all our dear friends. Fanny and I often speak of poor Jenny; but I fear there is no reason to hope for a more favourable account of her health. As papa writes to you by the same post which is to convey you this, about something that is to be done in the garden, I will only add, that I am, my dearest brothers,

"Your most sincerely affectionate sister,
"SOPHIA DANBY."

"P. S. I believe I forgot to tell you that James and Lucy send their love to you both. To-morrow, if the day is fine, we are to visit the house where my mamma and uncle were born."

Having thus, by the pen of Miss Danby, given my young readers some account of what was passing at East Field, we shall omit inserting the continuation

tion of her journal, as it contained nothing very important relative to these memoirs.

We will now attend to the feelings which the proposed visit, mentioned by Sophia in her postscript, inspired in the mind of Mr. Grey. This was a visit which he eagerly wished, yet dreaded to pay. The events that had taken place since the period of his quitting his native home, particularly the afflictions and death of his parents, could not but awaken emotions of the tenderest nature. The house in which Mr. Grey and Mrs. Danby were born, was now occupied by a person very well known to Mr. Davenport; consequently this gentleman and his friends met with a most obliging reception from the present proprietor. Mr. Grey surveyed every place with a great deal of attention, but was almost a silent spectator, seldom speaking, but when civility rendered it necessary. When a walk in the garden was proposed, he eagerly hastened to a scene, where the recollection of his early youth and days of childhood was assisted by a variety of well-known objects. Sophia perceiving by her uncle's countenance that he was much affected by contemplating those objects, quitted her young companion, and, silently approaching him, put her arm within his. Mr. Grey, by his looks, thanked her for this attention, and, pressing her hand, led her in silence through several shady walks and winding paths,

paths, leaving the rest of the company at a considerable distance.

They proceeded on for some time, till they arrived at a glen, whose singular and romantic beauty excited the admiration of Sophia. Mr. Grey bid her not fear descending the bank, for, unless new obstacles were formed, he assured her there was a safe and easy path that would lead them to the banks of a little rivulet, which they beheld gliding through this beautiful retreat, and which in clearness equalled the brightest mirror. Mr. Grey was not deceived: the same track which had received the impression of his boyish steps, seemed now before him without the smallest change; when he looked at the pathway, and then revolved in his mind the length of time since he last trod in it, he could scarcely persuade himself that such a number of years had actually passed.

They walked on for some time by the side of the transparent stream which ornamented this sequestered spot, when they arrived at a small opening, where was a kind of grotto, formed by the hand of Nature, whose inimitable skill taught the tufted foliage and embowering shades to give peculiar beauty to this inviting retreat. The grotto being somewhat elevated above the banks of the rivulet, distant objects appeared in view through casual divisions of the wood which inclosed this delightful little spot. Mr. Grey and Sophia seated themselves on a
mossy

mossy bank, when the former broke out into the following expressions: "Oh! Sophia," said he, "how I respect the hand that hath forborn to lay waste this my favourite retreat! How dear to memory is the recollection of those tranquil hours which I have passed in this retirement! Here have I beheld the first rays of the morning sun gilding the east with his resplendent beams; and here have I admired the milder beauties of his declining rays, tinging the clear blue sky with a thousand different shades: and how often in this silent grove have I contemplated the silver moon, diffusing her pale light through the opening branches, while her lucid and quivering rays decked the surface of the murmuring rivulet with varying but unsubstantial beauty! Here have I perused the moral and historic page. Under the shade of these venerable trees have I felt all that warmth and enthusiasm which the skilful poet so well knows how to excite. Here have I let fall the tear of sympathy in the cause of suffering virtue; and oft has my bosom glowed with that youthful ardour, which the desire of emulating the brave and the virtuous inspires. Here too have the hours glided imperceptibly along, while I pictured to myself the delight I one day hoped to experience, when I should no longer be confined to the narrow compass of British ground. Here have I in imagination visited the monuments of Egyptian grandeur—penetrated the recesses of Herculean magnificence

—wandered by the sides of rivers sacred to ancient song—trodden on ground consecrated to the manes of the patriot and the hero, whose glorious deeds have immortalized their memories—admired the temples, where the orator has animated his auditors with the desire of saving their country; where he has taught them to regard life and property as dishonourable possessions, when that country demanded them in sacrifice.”

Here Mr. Grey ceased speaking; but his expressive countenance strongly indicated a mind full of sensibility. After continuing for some time in a thoughtful posture, with his eyes bent on the ground, he turned towards Sophia, who had sat a silent, but not an unconcerned spectator of his meditations. “My dear Sophia,” said he, “I have for a few moments been lost in a sweet and pleasing dream; I have been retracing my happy days; happy, because innocent. Yes, my Sophia, I once wandered through these shades with a mind guiltless as your own.” Then wringing his hands in an agony of distress, he added, “But where, where shall I now seek for consolation? My injured parents are no longer in a situation to bestow it; they witness not my penitence; they know not that their repentant son valued life only in the hope that they would receive and forgive him.”

Sophia could now no longer preserve her composure, and in endeavouring to restore her mind to
its

its usual serenity Mr. Grey was in some measure drawn from contemplating his own misfortunes. Soon after this they were joined by the rest of the company; but Mr. Grey was too much engrossed by his own reflections to be able to enter into general conversation; and, immediately on his return to East Field, he retired to his apartment, where he endeavoured to revisit, in idea, each particular scene he had just quitted. In this he succeeded to his wish, and could not forbear committing his thoughts to paper, which produced the following

O D E.

“HAIL gentle stream, whose lucid current flows
Through many a winding glen with foliage
crown'd;

Again thy banks their wonted sweets disclose,
Thy fragrant banks, where Spring's gay flow'rs
abound;

On the green slope, beneath this shelt'ring pine,
Whose branches wave with gay fantastic grace,
My mind to Mem'ry's pow'rs I'll now resign,
And all my native, much-lov'd haunts retrace;
Recall with fond enthusiastic care
Those sweet impressions still to mem'ry dear,
And which the world, with all its cares, could
never yet efface.

“Dear to my youthful heart was that lone spot,
Deck'd by the drooping willow's pensive shade,
Where

Where rose with simple grace the rural cot,
Half veil'd from view, embosom'd in the glade;
But dearer still that inoffensive race,
Whose virtues render'd sacred this lov'd place.
Where are ye now, ye gentle spirits say;
Ye friends so true, so innocent, so gay!
Whither, alas! ah, whither are ye fled?
Sleep your remains among the silent dead?
Or are ye doom'd through distant lands to roam,
Far, far remov'd from your delightful home?
How oft your placid smiles my heart has cheer'd!
Much were ye then belov'd; now lov'd, lamented,
and rever'd.

“ And while I view with eager gaze
The open lawn, th' impervious maze,
Behold again my fav'rite wood,
The grassy mead, the peaceful flood;
Let me not unmindful prove
Of thee, my long-forsaken grove;
Where at the sultry hour of noon,
Retiring from a fervid sun,
I've sought thy sweet refreshing shade;
Reposing there my languid head:
Oft too at dewy eve's serene advance,
Whose fainter light illumines the clear expanse—
Sweet silent eve! whose soft and gentle reign
Sheds a kind influence o'er th' exhausted plain—
Well pleas'd; I then to Contemplation's pow'r
Would yield the sober, the instructive hour.

Paint.

Paint Truth and Virtue to the mental eye,
With all thy charms divine, sweet Sensibility."

While Mr. Grey was thus indulging a propensity which had sometimes yielded him a temporary relief in the hours of affliction, Mr. Danby was engaged in reading a letter from his eldest son, with which he was presented on his return from his morning's excursion. Soon after dinner was over, he put this letter into the hands of James Davenport, desiring him to read it aloud, which he did as follows:

To CHARLES DANBY, Esq.

"DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,

"MY brother and I were very happy to hear that you and my mother, my uncle and sisters, all arrived safe and well at East Field. I have the pleasure to say that William and George, as well as the rest of our friends here, are in very good health. I think I never saw Mr. Oswald look better. I was at Rose Hill this morning, and Mrs. Jane desired me to give her duty to you, and my mother and uncle, and inform you that George has been a very good boy during your absence, and that he is quite happy and in good spirits. William and I were at the Hill this morning by six o'clock, for the weather is too warm for us to do any thing in our gardens, except mornings and evenings; and in the evening Mr. Oswald is so good as to contrive some amusement for us, when we are not visiting our neighbours.

bours. Yesterday we all dined at the Castle. Mrs. Molineux bid me remember her best respects, and also desired me to mention that she received a letter from Maria yesterday, who was very well, except having a slight cold.

"The weather has been so extremely warm and dry, that the garden has required a great deal of water since you went: and John has not been sparing of his trouble in giving it a plentiful supply. He has also made great progress with the work which you left him orders to do: I was quite surprised this morning when I saw how much he had done, and I told him I supposed he intended having some holidays before his master came home, he was working so hard. But he said, No, that was not it; for he was never so happy as when he was doing his best to serve so good a master. So I told him, that when I wrote I would let you know he had been very diligent.

"And now I must relate to my dear father a little adventure which William and I met with this morning, as we were returning from the Hill to Mr. Oswald's. By the time we reached the large clover-field, we found ourselves a good deal overcome by the heat of the morning, and were tempted to rest for a short time under the oak-trees which shade the high sloping bank. We had not sat here more than a minute or two, before we perceived that a poor man and his son, a boy, as we afterwards found,

found, about William's age, were on the other side of the hedge eating their breakfast. The conversation which passed between them I will endeavour to recollect, and give it you in their own words if possible. I was so much taken up with what I heard, that I never considered till afterwards, whether we were doing right to let them proceed, without acquainting them that we were near enough to hear what they said. The dialogue began as follows:

"*Father.* 'Here, Jackey, do take this nice crust, for indeed I have had quite enough.'

"*Jackey.* 'No, father, not another bit: I must see you eat it; consider what a deal of strength you want to pull up; I should count it a fine thing if I could but see you look as you used to do; and I hope you soon will when we get to Mr. Fairfield's; for I dare say we shall be quite happy then. How many miles have we to travel from this place, father?'

"*Father.* 'About fifteen, my dear child; but God knows how we shall be received. I would not dishearten you, my dear Jackey, but I cannot help having some fears about it; there are very hard-hearted people in the world.'

"*Jackey.* 'Never fear, dear father; but come, you must eat that morsel of bread; you see we have great store yet; and if we should fall short before we reach our rich cousin, we have still a little money you know, thanks to good neighbour Gubbins.'

bins. And should the worst come to the worst, I can very well put up with a scanty meal, so that you have enough; for I am young and hardy, you know.'

"*Father.* 'I know, my dear boy, that thou art good and dutiful; and may I be ever thankful to God, who has given me such a blessing to comfort me in all my distresses! I think we will sit and rest a while in this pleasant spot, and you shall say your lesson presently, Jackey.'

"*Jackey.* 'Yes, that I will; and I dare say Mr. Fairfield will like me the better when he finds I can read in the Bible. And I have been thinking what I shall say to him, when you have told him all about our misfortunes. If you think well of it I shall begin thus: 'I hope, Sir, you will be so good as to take compassion upon my poor father, who, before his illness, was reckoned one of the best-working men in our country; and I hope, through the blessing of God and your goodness, he will soon be as strong as ever.' Then as to myself I will say, 'I am but a little boy as yet, to be sure; but then I am as hard as iron, as one may say, and as willing as ever was—then I can take care of the cattle—drive 'em to the field and from the field—patch up a broken fence—and if the cows or the sheep go astray, fetch 'em back in a twinkling, for I am very nimble o'foot. Then wit'in doors I can make the fire, clean shoes, sharpen knives, and

“and make the oak table shine; besides many ‘other odd jobs, that I hope you will find I can do ‘very handily.’ Never fear, father, but he will either take us in, or provide some place for us where our desire to be diligent will make us welcome.”

“*Father.* ‘God grant it, child!’

“*Jackey.* ‘But then don’t look so sorrowful, father; times will mend, I warrant; and when I am a man, I hope I shall make you quite easy: if working hard will do it, I’m sure you shall be so. And though I can’t do as much as I wish for Mr. Fairfield now, to make him the better to you, he will find I shall be very little cost to him. As to shoes, I shall want none, for my feet are so pure and hard now at the bottom, that I can do very well without them: and any sort of cast clothes will serve me well enough. Then as to eating, just a brown crust and a little skimmed milk and water, or even water itself, will please me mighty well for my breakfast; and as to my dinner, why just a bit of whatever is going, and the worst of that, will do; and as to supper, why I don’t care much about it, for if I should be a little hungry or so, why I shall fall asleep, and then, you know, it will be all as one, for I shall feel just the same in the morning.’

“Poor William had been ready to cry several times while listening to the above conversation; but

but these last words of little Jackey went to his heart, and he burst into a flood of tears: this alarmed our neighbours; so I got up, and, looking through an opening in the hedge, said, 'Don't disturb yourselves, my good friends; 't is only my brother and I who sat down to rest in the shade: and my brother is crying to think that any body who seems to be so good should be so distressed: but we will come round and speak to you.' So away we ran to the stile at the bottom of the field, without thinking of being either tired or warm. When we came to the place where this poor man and his son were, we seated ourselves near them. The man appeared as if just recovering from a severe fit of sickness, and seemed to be very weak and feeble. I had scarcely asked our new friend what misfortunes he had met with, that had reduced him to his present distressing situation, before William started up, telling me he would soon be with me again, and away he ran across the fields; but in a very short time we discovered him returning, with a pitcher in one hand, and a loaf of bread in the other. The pitcher contained some excellent new milk, just warm from the cow, which proved a most delicious repast for our travellers. 'Ah! my dear young masters,' said Samuel, 'if every one had hearts like you, we should not have been brought to this state of poverty; but I should be very ungrateful to complain, for God has raised me up many friends.'

"Although I wished to hear the particulars of Samuel's

Samuel's history, I was unwilling to stay any longer, as I thought Mr. Oswald might be displeased if we were absent much longer than usual; so I asked if he had any objection to remain where he was till about one o'clock; he said that was what he intended; for that he was too much fatigued to proceed on his journey at present: so, after promising them to return when our morning lessons were finished, we took our leave. This promise seemed to give them both great pleasure; for William had told them that we had parents who loved to relieve honest and industrious poor people; and though they were absent from home at present, yet he doubted not but that in time something would be done for them.

"Whilst we were at breakfast we gave Mr. Oswald an account of our new acquaintance, who expressed much concern for the distress which Samuel and his son were reduced to, and said it was his intention to accompany us when we repaired to the place where we had left, and where we expected again to see them. Accordingly, as soon as the business of the morning was concluded, we all set out, and found Jackey and his father sitting in the very spot where we had left them. They seemed at first to be a little disconcerted by Mr. Oswald's appearance; but his kind manner of speaking encouraged Samuel to relate the particulars of his little history, which he did as follows:

“ ‘ My name, Sir, is Samuel Johnson. I was born of honest parents, who lived in credit on a little farm about thirty miles from this place. Before my father died I was fixed in a small habitation fourteen miles from the village where I was born, and where I had a bit of ground and a few cattle to earn my bread by. I married an industrious young woman, whose housewifery within doors, added to my labour in the farm, enabled us, with the blessing of God, to live as comfortably as our hearts could wish. But our happiness was of short duration: yet God knows what is best for us all. We had not been married more than two years and a half when my poor wife took an illness that carried her off in less than a fortnight, leaving me this little boy, then about fifteen months old. This was a heavy affliction, to be sure; however, I knew it was more my duty to do my best for my poor child, than to give myself up to grief; so I struggled hard to get the better of my sorrow. For four years things prospered very well, and I was able to pay my rent, and lay by a little money at the end of every twelvemonth: but after this I had nothing but misfortunes; so that, what with bad crops and the loss of cattle, I was brought to a worse state than when I first entered on the farm. However, I did not despair, knowing that God in the long run loves to bless the honest dealer; so I was resolved, if possible,

possible to double my diligence. But how little should we short-sighted mortals reckon upon what is to come!

“When things were in this situation, instead of being bettered by my industry, we were brought to absolute poverty; for I was seized with a fever that left me so weak as not to be able to stir out of my own dwelling for ten weeks. During this melancholy time I received great assistance from my good neighbours; and my dear Jackey nursed me in the best manner he was able. As soon as I had strength to get about again, I was in hopes that if my landlord would have patience I might still be able to bring things round; but, alack-a-day! I had a hard-hearted man to deal with; for not having it in my power to pay my rent as usual, he seized upon what little property I had, and turned me out of the farm, when I had scarcely strength to creep fifty yards from the door of the habitation I had regarded as my own.

“When my poor neighbours found how things were, they gathered about my landlord, and tried to soften him, and persuade him to let me have the farm another year, saying, they would every one of them give me a day's work now and then, without expecting any reward. You would think that this kindness might have led him to act with some compassion towards me himself, having an example set him by those who were but little able to assist others: however, it was no such thing; for he persisted in
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turning me adrift. And now it was that I found the sweets of having lived peaceably and honestly, for my kind neighbours all did their best to comfort me; and good Richard Gubbins took us both to his own cottage, which was hard by, where I sat for some time weeping like a child, partly with grief, and partly with gratitude. So we continued to live among our generous friends for almost a month, when I could no longer bear the thoughts of being burdensome to them, and having a rich cousin who once made me offers of kindness, and who lives about fifteen miles from hence, I resolved to go and make known my condition; for all that I desire is to work as hard as my strength will allow, for the support of myself and my son; and we hope to reach Mr. Fairfield's house to-morrow morning before the heat of the day comes on.

"Here Samuel left off speaking, and Mr. Oswald encouraged him to hope that all would turn out for the best; and said, that in case his cousin did not give him a kind reception, he had no doubt but that it would be in his power to assist him in some way or other to procure bread for himself and Jackey. I then recollected hearing farmer Wilson say, that he was in want of a little boy to look after the cattle, which I mentioned to Mr. Oswald, who finding that Samuel would be willing to leave his son with any one whom he should recommend, we all

at last agreed that we should start on our journey to-morrow morning.

went together to the farmer's, who after hearing what Mr. Oswald had to say, and putting a few questions to Jackey, whose looks pleased him very much, he consented to take him. This agreement was no sooner made than Jackey was furnished with shoes and stockings, together with some old clothes of Tommy Wilton's; and, had it not been for the thoughts of parting with his father, would have felt as happy as a prince; however, Samuel promised he would send a letter to Mr. Oswald by the first opportunity. A little collection being made for poor Samuel, he set out on his journey about four o'clock in the afternoon. William and I were very glad that between us we had almost half a crown remaining of our pocket-money, and which, after some entreaty, we prevailed on Samuel to accept.

"I am afraid, dear Sir, you have thought me too minute in describing this little anecdote; but I hope you will be so good as to excuse it, as we feel ourselves much interested in what relates to Samuel and Jackey. William is quite delighted with the thoughts of the latter being fixed in the neighbourhood.

"We heard of poor Jenny yesterday, who still continues very ill: she thinks herself so much obliged to my mother, that she does not know how to express her gratitude for the fine fruit she receives, and which is a great refreshment to her.

"William joins me in most dutiful remembrance

to you, my mother, and uncle; also kind love to my sisters. Mr. Oswald desires his best respects.

"Believe me, my dear Sir,

"Your most dutiful and affectionate son,

"CHARLES DANBY."

Various other letters passed between East Field and Rose Hill before Mr. and Mrs. Danby, with their brother and children, returned into Devonshire; but as nothing particularly interesting occurred, I shall omit inserting them, and advert to a letter of Miss Danby's, written to her friend in a very short time after her arrival at Rose Hill, to whom she thus expresses herself:

To Miss MOLINEUX.

"MY EVER DEAR MARIA,

"WERE I to tell you how often I have thought of you since I quitted Rose Hill, this would be the longest letter I ever wrote; but that would be quite impossible. However, I know that my dear friend is fully convinced of my sincerity and affection; so I will only say, that I am quite happy again to engage in an employment so pleasing to me. I saw all your dear family this day; and your mamma, I find, was so good as to take the trouble of reading my little journal, and of communicating to you many particulars of our agreeable visit. As I know

know your mamma would make all the allowances for young writers which they could desire, I was not uneasy at her seeing my letters; and you may be certain that if they afforded her the least degree of amusement, it could not but give me great pleasure.

"You would perceive, my dear, that our time passed very pleasantly at East Field. I could not help being exceedingly sorry indeed when we came away; yet that sorrow was so mixed with joy, that, although I shed a great many tears, I believe it would have been difficult for me to say from what cause they flowed; for I never thought of leaving East Field without picturing to myself a delightful meeting with all my dear friends at Rose Hill.

"Mr. and Mrs. Davenport have promised, if all be well, to pay us a long visit next summer, and bring with them Lucy, James, and Maria. Oh! how happy should I be to introduce my two dear friends to each other!

"You have heard the great news, no doubt; the village is all in commotion I find, hourly expecting the arrival of Lord and Lady Maitland. Every one, I suppose, will be eager to pay court to the newcomers; but I imagine their stay will be short, as it is said this visit is only to take a survey of their new possessions, and give some orders about alterations; for the old lord let every thing run greatly out of repair; so I hope there will be plenty of work for the poor people during the winter. I find

mamma has no intention of visiting Lady Maitland, as she hears she is quite a fine lady; therefore, mamma says, not at all a suitable acquaintance for her. I'm sure I am quite as well pleased; for I don't think I should feel comfortable in her ladyship's presence, as she would no doubt regard us as scarcely worthy of her notice.

"You have heard the history of little Jackey, I find; William was so desirous of showing him to us, that he went over to farmer Wilson's the morning after our arrival, to beg of him to spare Jackey for an hour or two, which request he was good enough to comply with. He is a very sensible-looking little boy, and has as fine a countenance as ever I saw. Mamma asked him many questions, which he answered in a manner that pleased her very much: he appeared to be quite happy at the thoughts of remaining in Mr. Wilson's family: for he said he had plenty of time both to play and to mind his book. I asked him who first taught him to read? 'My father, to be sure, Miss,' he replied: 'for he is a fine scholar; and the schoolmaster in our village used to say he was almost as good at accounts as himself; and he often told me, if I gave my mind to my book, my father would make a scholar of me.' 'Then I hope you followed his advice, Jackey?' said my mamma. 'Why yes; I hope I did, Madam,' he replied; 'for I was always fond of reading; but then when our troubles began, and my

my father fell sick, I was so disheartened that I did not think about my books : and then I had nobody to mind me ; for though our schoolmaster made an offer of teaching me for nothing till times should mend, I would not leave my father for all the scholarship he could give me.'

" My mamma commended him for his dutiful behaviour, and asked him how his father liked his new situation, and if he had heard lately in what state his health was. Jackey said that Mr. Oswald received a letter from his father but a few days ago, who mentioned being quite happy with Mr. Fairfield ; for that, being rather sickly, he was very glad of an honest person that could take his place sometimes in the grounds, and who understood all kinds of husbandry ; and as to his health, it was better and better every day. I asked him if he would not like to go and live with his father at Mr. Fairfield's. He said, he should like it, to be sure, very well, and that Mr. Fairfield was willing to take him, only that he would not do any thing unhandsome by Mr. Wilson, who had been so good to him ; especially as he went every morning to the parsonage by eight o'clock, and stayed for an hour to get some learning from Mr. Oswald, who had been the best of friends to him. My mamma praised him for the grateful manner in which he spoke of the favours that had been bestowed upon him ; and after giving him some good advice, and promising to be a friend to him if he continued to

behave well, put a book into his hands, desiring him to read to her, which he did very prettily, considering the irregular manner in which he had been taught. William, after whispering something to his mamma, went out of the room for a few minutes, and returned with a plate of apples and pears, which, with an appearance of great satisfaction, he presented to Jackey, whose pockets he took much pleasure in filling with them.

“ Ah! my dear Maria, what a sad thing has happened! Fanny is just come up with tears in her eyes, to tell me that good Mr. Howard is below, who has received a letter from Mr. Manly, acquainting him that his son had left the school, and desiring to be informed whether he has returned home, as all possible inquiries had been made to no purpose. Poor Mr. Howard had some hopes that he might be in the neighbourhood, and accordingly made diligent search for him; but all in vain; and he is now in the greatest distress. What would become of my dear papa and mamma, what would become of us all, if Charles or William were to act thus? I think I should almost die with weeping; but let me not harbour a thought so full of horror. How sorry I am for poor Mr. Howard! Worthy, good man! little did he think that this darling child, on whom he doated with so much fondness, would become disobedient and ungrateful. Oh! how can he think on what his father must suffer, without

without hastening to lessen those sufferings, and beg for forgiveness?

"This subject has so entirely taken up my thoughts, that I cannot attempt writing upon any other; and, indeed, I believe it is time to send my letter to your mamma, who, as usual, will enclose it in hers. We all unite in kindest love to my dear friend, who, I hope, will soon write to her most affectionate

"SOPHIA DANBY."

Miss Danby had no sooner finished her letter than she took it down to her mamma, whom she saw walking in the garden with Mr. Grey, Mr. Danby and Mr. Howard being gone out together. The circumstance of Master Howard's elopement engrossed the attention of every one at Rose Hill, and threw an air of melancholy over the whole family. The feelings of these sympathizing friends were but little consonant with the voice of general acclamation and joy which resounded through every part of the village, proclaiming the arrival of Lord Maitland and his family. Nothing was to be heard but ringing of bells, firing of guns, and shouts of triumph: bonfires were also preparing, the materials for which had been for some time in readiness.

Mr. Howard and Mr. Danby did not return till it was after nine o'clock; and all the inquiries they had made concerning the unhappy boy who had

plunged his father into so much distress were wholly ineffectual. My amiable young readers will, I am sure, sincerely sympathize with the good Mr. Howard in this trying situation, whose afflictions were of a nature the most poignant and corroding. When he took a retrospective view of his conduct towards this disobedient child, if he had any errors to charge himself with, it was only those which proceeded from extreme fondness and excessive affection. Deprived of his mother early in life, George Howard depended solely on the care and protection of his only surviving parent. What were the feelings of that parent in such a situation? They were such as rendered him, comparatively speaking, careless and indifferent about such concerns as related not immediately to his dearest treasure—his only and beloved child. What then must be his sufferings, on finding that the return made him for all this anxiety and solicitude was that of disobedience, neglect, and ingratitude? Should any one who reads this page feel himself included in that just censure which must fall upon all those unhappy children whose conduct has any affinity or resemblance to that of George Howard, may they seriously reflect upon the errors they are in the habit of committing, and without delay correct them! May they exert every power, every faculty, that will enable them to conquer those unhappy propensities of disposition, which, if encouraged and indulged, *must* lead to certain

certain misery, and *probably* terminate in total and everlasting destruction!

I am willing to seize this opportunity of cautioning my young friends not to give way to those inclinations which prompt them to act, even in trifling concerns, contrary to the advice and approbation of those whom it is their duty and interest to obey. To comply with an impulse of this nature, is to plunge themselves into a situation dangerous and difficult beyond what I can describe. They are preparing for themselves trials, of the severity of which they have no conception, till they feel the bitter effects of such a compliance with propensities and passions, which for want of being early subdued are gaining an ascendancy that will lead them to the very brink of ruin.

Methinks I behold at this moment the misguided, inexperienced traveller, quitting the smooth and secure path of innocence: I shudder with horror, while I see him with incautious steps pursuing his way through the frightful and dangerous road that opens before him: I tremble while I behold him, with a careless kind of confidence, rush past the monitors who in vain attempt to stop the progress of his journey. In vain does Duty, with her warning voice—in vain does Friendship, with her gentle admonitions, endeavour to restrain him. Wretched and infatuated child! whither wouldst thou go? Seest thou not the horrid precipice, towards which

thou art making such rapid progress? Perceivest thou not the abyss, into which thou must inevitably plunge, if thou turnest not aside from thy mad and ruinous career? In vain would my aching sight attempt to explore these dreary regions of despair and death; in vain trace some glimmering of light, some cheering ray of hope, administering to the wretched inhabitants a little gleam of comfort. Alas! all is a scene of inconceivable horror—of unavailing regret. Sorry should I be to wound the gentle spirit of unoffending innocence, by subjecting them to contemplate the gloomy and terrific picture I have just been endeavouring to draw. But should it be the means of restoring *one* deluded wanderer to the paths of rectitude and peace, I know it will be, to such readers, an ample recompence for the pain it may have occasioned.

But to return to our history. It was some alleviation to the sorrows of Mr. Howard, that he had at this time the company of a niece, who was lately become a widow. This lady had a little daughter of about three years of age, of whom Mr. Howard was extremely fond, and whose innocent and engaging prattle enlivened many an hour that might otherwise have been tinged with sadness. The house of Mr. Howard was a very desirable asylum for Mrs. Golding, whose circumstances were by no means affluent; and the exertions which she made in order to amuse her benefactor assisted in with-
drawing

drawing her thoughts from the contemplation of her own misfortunes.

When Mr. Howard returned home, after making fruitless search for his fugitive son, little Betsey had been enjoying for some time the sweets of a profound sleep. It was this evening beyond the power of Mrs. Golding to give a turn to the melancholy train of ideas which had taken possession of her uncle's mind. He sat with his eyes riveted on the ground, and his head resting on his hand. He had not resolution to quit the parlour, even at a very late hour. He listened eagerly to every noise, thinking it possible that his deluded boy was about to rush into his arms and implore his forgiveness; but the noises ceased, and no repentant child came to mitigate the woes of an afflicted parent. When the clock struck two, Mrs. Golding used every argument she could think of to prevail upon her uncle to retire to bed. In compliance with her entreaties he repaired to his apartment: a heart torn, however, as his was, by the most agonizing reflections, but ill prepared him to enjoy that repose which his exhausted spirits required. He threw himself into a chair in a situation of mind truly pitiable, where he remained till the morning sun gilded his chamber with its radiant beams. The sight of this bright luminary afforded some degree of comfort to the good old gentleman, as it banished from his mind the idea of his son being a nightly wanderer. Thus relieved

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from a part of his anxiety, he at length buried his sorrows in a transient forgetfulness.

Mrs. Danby had not as yet seen her little friend at the cottage, who she heard was extremely ill; but was determined on the morning of this day to pay her a visit. Accordingly, as soon as breakfast was over she set out towards the habitation of Mary. She found her sitting by the side of her almost expiring child, who was stretched on a couch; and who, though she had death in her face, was under none of those horrors which sometimes attend him. She had a placid smile on her countenance; and a gleam of pleasure spread itself over her emaciated face as soon as Mrs. Danby approached her. "Ah Madam!" she exclaimed in a faint and tremulous voice; "how glad I am to see you once again before I die! I thought I saw you last night, but I afterwards found it was only a dream. I have often prayed to God to bless you, and your good family. I am afraid I must not see Miss Danby again, because she has such a tender heart, that it might grieve her too much to see me thus. Yet if she did but know how willing I am to obey the call of my heavenly Father, she would rejoice to think I was so soon to be taken out of a world so full of sorrow and sickness, and removed to one where dutiful children will be made happy for ever." Jenny no sooner pronounced these last words than her voice failed her; and, closing her eyes, she lay for some time

time quite motionless. In about an hour she again revived, and, casting a look full of affection on Mrs. Danby, said, "God bless you, Madam! Tell your dear children, that, if they will believe the words of poor Jenny, they will find goodness better than riches. Kiss me, dear mother, and do not weep. Sally, come hither; be good and dutiful, and comfort your mother: and tell Joseph, I should not have died in peace if I had not believed that he would never forsake his mother and you, but that he would do his best for you both. I hope we shall all meet again, never to part any more. Do not cry, Sally: only think of me as being gone to be made happy." These were the last words which Jenny ever spoke in this world. She lay perfectly still for near half an hour; then heaving a gentle sigh, her innocent unoffending spirit quitted its mansion of clay, and resigned itself into the hands of its Maker, its Father, and God.

Mrs. Danby stayed some time with Mary, giving her such advice, assistance, and consolation, as she thought her situation required. On taking her leave she acquainted her that she should herself give every necessary direction respecting the funeral of her departed daughter. A little before Mrs. Danby reached her own house, she was awakened from the reverie into which the thoughts of her little philosophic and pious friend had plunged her by her two sons, who overtook her as they were returning
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from Mr. Oswald's. They advised their mother to make as much haste as possible, for that in all probability they would scarcely be able to avoid a heavy shower, that seemed ready to issue from the black cloud which hung over them. Mrs. Danby had been so much engrossed by her own reflections, that she had paid but little attention to the change which had taken place in the weather; instead of a bright sun and a clear sky, nothing was to be seen but gathering clouds, which seemed ready to pour down their accumulated and watery stores. Charles assisted his mother as much as possible in facilitating her return, and they arrived just in time to escape the violence of the rain, which came rushing down with the utmost impetuosity.

Mrs. Danby made immediate inquiries respecting the rest of her family, and was under some uneasiness to find that they were variously dispersed. Servants were dispatched different ways in search of the children; and in a few minutes the whole family were assembled in the garden-parlour. Mr. Danby and Mr. Grey repaired to the place of general rendezvous from the harvest-field, a place which the latter took much pleasure in frequenting. Sophia came running from the garden, where she stayed to bind up some favourite flowers till the last moment, and in her way lost every curl which had just before graced her ivory neck. Fanny's dress was still more discomposed than that of her sister, having been playing with

with little George in the shrubbery ; and, in order to accommodate her pace to her brother's, she had partaken pretty largely of the shower, the servant whom Mrs. Danby had sent out to look for her young people having mistaken the places to which they had resorted. When every thing was adjusted, and each, except Mrs. Danby, had communicated what they had to say, that lady related what had passed at the cottage, which greatly interested every one present.

On Wednesday, the twenty third of September, the remains of the amiable little cottager were deposited in the bosom of the earth. A white pall was thrown over her coffin, which was borne by six young girls, dressed neatly in white frocks, two of whom were Sophia and Fanny Danby. Mary, with her daughter Sally in her hand, and supported by her son, followed the coffin ; which little procession was attended by the greatest part of the villagers, whose silent steps and mournful countenances corresponded with the nature of their feelings ; for Jenny was beloved and lamented by all who knew her.

It was about a week after this event, when Mrs. Danby was taking a walk in the garden one morning with Sophia, that Fanny came running to her almost out of breath, exclaiming, " Oh mamma ! mamma ! what do you think ? "—" Indeed, my dear," replied her mother, " I am at a loss to think what can have
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disconcerted you thus; but whatever it is, I must request you will endeavour to tell me with composure." Fanny, on hearing her mother say this, which was accompanied with some degree of seriousness, appeared as if conscious that her intelligence would not be deemed of importance sufficient to justify the animated preface with which it was preceded. With a look somewhat abashed, she told her mamma, that there was just driven up to the hall-door the finest carriage she had ever seen, attended by two footmen, whose clothes were almost covered with lace. Before Mrs. Danby had time to reply, a servant approached, to acquaint her that Lady Maitland, Miss Maitland, and another young lady, were come to wait upon her. This was a very unexpected visit; however, Mrs. Danby hastened to the parlour in order to receive her guests, Sophia and Fanny promising to follow her in a few minutes. Lady Maitland apologized very politely for what she called an intrusion; then introduced Miss Conyers, her niece, and Miss Maitland, her daughter. Mrs. Danby expressed her sense of the favour conferred upon her; but Lady Maitland would not admit of that construction being put upon her visit: for she said, she came as humble solicitor for the privilege of being ranked among the number of her friends. "And I am told," continued her ladyship, "that Miss Danby is so amiable and so accomplished, that I am persuaded she will be a most eligible companion."

panion for Miss Maitland, although two years younger, I believe. And Miss Conyers, who is still older than my daughter, will be happy to instruct Miss Danby in any little point which her superior years and her acquaintance with the polite world so well enable her to understand."

Mrs. Danby told Lady Maitland, that she had been misinformed in regard to Sophia's acquirements; for though she hoped her daughter was not deficient in such attainments as were suitable to her station, yet *that* station and *those* attainments were too remote from Miss Maitland's, to render her a suitable companion for a young lady so greatly her superior in rank.

Just as Mrs. Danby had pronounced the foregoing words our young ladies entered the room. Sophia paid her compliments with that easy gentility, yet modest diffidence, which so peculiarly distinguished her; and which, if it had failed to prepossess the strangers to whom she was now introduced in her favour, would not have produced its accustomed effect. After some general conversation, a walk in the garden was proposed, and by the young ladies accepted. Lady Maitland declined going out, as she said she had walked for some time in the domain previous to her leaving home. Sophia could not avoid feeling some degree of embarrassment at the idea of its being expected she should entertain these ladies, who were not only so much older, but so totally

totally different in their manners, and their whole appearance, from herself. However, she was soon relieved from all fear with regard to this circumstance, by the perfect ease and familiarity by which the behaviour and conversation of her guests were distinguished. They walked for some time in the south garden; then seated themselves in the arbour, which has been already mentioned, where the subsequent conversation immediately commenced:

Miss C. "These gardens are really pleasant. How many months in the year do you usually spend at this little villa, Miss Danby?"

Miss D. "We never live in any other place but this, Ma'am."

Miss C. "Astonishing! And how do you contrive to murder time? How invent schemes to coax on the tedious hours?"

Miss D. (*Surprised.*) "Ma'am!"

Miss C. "I say, my dear, do you not find time insupportably tedious?"

Miss D. "O, not at all! quite otherwise: we are always wishing the day longer than it is. Then the winter evenings are so delightful! If we can get leave to stay up half an hour longer than usual, we think it quite a treat."

Miss M. "Really! And do you never feel languid and tired, and longing with impatience for the next day, or the next hour, to relieve you from that

that wearisome insipidity, which, I should think, would here render life almost a burden?"

Miss D. "Never, indeed, Ma'am."

Miss C. "Well, Miss Danby, you are in possession of a most valuable secret: can I prevail upon you to reveal it for the benefit of Miss Maitland and myself?"

Miss D. "Who, I, Ma'am? I in possession of a secret? You are quite mistaken indeed: for I will never keep any thing secret from my mamma."

Miss C. (Smiling.) "Well then, my dear, to speak in other words, do inform us how you contrive to amuse yourself in this solitude, at that season of the year when any other place but a crowded city would appear to us a perfect desert."

Miss D. "We have such a variety of pleasant amusements, that I cannot call to recollection all of them without considering a little."

Miss M. "Well, I beg you will take time to consider; for I confess my curiosity is very much raised. I wish I could adopt any of your occupations, that would help to drive away my old enemy, ennui."

Miss C. "That would be a charming thing indeed; for I would give almost half my fortune to be for ever exempt from such an oppressive tormentor. However, I do expect that in future, as I am to enter more generally into the pleasures of life, I shall not have so much reason to complain as

I have

I have had. My sister is two years older than I am, and you must confess it to be a very mortifying thing, to see her dressed out in all the elegance of fashion, sallying forth to public places, while I was left at home with nothing to console me but any little trivial amusement I could invent to pass away the time. Miss Maitland would give the world to be one year older: would you not, Arabella?"

Miss M. "Indeed I should be very glad; for my mamma says it would be a great disadvantage to me to be introduced into public life while I am so young. But I declare, I think it is very afflictive to be deprived of what constitutes the chief pleasures of life, when arrived at an age to enjoy them. So, I suppose, I shall pass a most tedious winter, though in London."

Miss C. "I fear, indeed, some of your hours, my dear, will be a little tinged with this said *ennui*. I am allowed by every one who knows me to have most extraordinary great spirits. Sir Harry often tells me I am the most volatile creature breathing; and that he would give an immensity to have but half such charming spirits. I never certainly acknowledged to him that I knew what it was to be grave or melancholy; yet I am sure I have wept for hours together, for the mere want of something gay and agreeable to amuse me. But thanks to the twelfth of next month, when I shall complete my sixteenth year! such times I hope will then be past; and what
appeared

appeared a perfect blank, will this winter be filled up with those enchanting engagements which are, I think, alone worth living for. But come, my dear Miss Danby, do satisfy the curiosity you have excited. Arabella, I hope, will profit by your history, and carry with her to town some of your devices to kill time. Give us a regular account of the manner in which you pass a dreary winter's day. We will suppose now, that the cheerless month of December is just commenced; although, I declare, the very idea of being here at such a season makes me shudder. But I will try, notwithstanding, to go through with the picture; and, to render it complete, the ground shall be covered with frost and snow—the winds shall whistle through the leafless trees—not a gleam of sunshine shall penetrate through the black clouds. Arabella, why don't you help me? Positively you would let the words freeze in my mouth without assisting me. How can you be so cruel?"

Miss M. "Indeed, my dear Charlotte, I think you want no assistance. You seem to understand painting the horrors sufficiently well. Pray make haste, or I shall be half dead with the vapours."

Miss C. "I have quite done. It now remains for Miss Danby to fill up the day which I have prepared for her. What is your hour of rising, my dear? for we must begin methodically."

Miss D. "At the season you mention, we seldom rise before eight, Ma'am.

Miss C. "Eight! did you say eight o'clock? I am more than ever amazed. But come, I promise to interrupt you no more if I can possibly avoid it. But only think of eight o'clock on a winter's morning!"

Miss D. "When the days are so short, we seldom get our lessons before breakfast, which is always ready at nine; but use some exercise, either on the broad walk in this garden, or in the play-room, just as the weather happens to suit. As soon as breakfast is over, my brothers either go to Mr. Oswald's or attend my papa in his study, and Fanny and I receive instructions from my mamma, in working, reading, and spelling. Then at one o'clock my brothers are at liberty; and we are always glad to meet again, after being separated for the morning, and we generally pass the time together till two o'clock; if the weather is fine, in the garden; and if not, in the play-room."

Miss M. "Will you permit me to interrupt you for a moment, Miss Danby? Do you not find the mornings insupportably tedious? I'm sure I should think it a dreadful thing to sit poring over books and work for three or four hours together."

Miss D. "Perhaps I might too, if mamma did not contrive to amuse as well as instruct us; but she takes such pleasure in making our employments agreeable.

agreeable to us, that it would be almost impossible to feel weary."

Miss C. "Then your work is generally in the fancy way, I suppose?"

Miss D. "No, indeed; we have a great deal of plain work to do: for mamma, Fanny, and I, make all the shirts that my papa and brothers wear. It is only when we have not any thing of more importance to do, that we are permitted to work on muslin, or do flowers in embroidery."

Miss C. "Is it possible? Well! I think if Lady Maitland were to insist upon my performing so laborious a task as that of making a shirt, I should almost cry myself blind."

Miss M. "I think I could almost as soon accomplish a walk from hence to Bath, as go through with such an undertaking."

Miss D. "I am quite surprised, ladies, to find that you would think it such a hardship. I assure you I was delighted on being permitted to make a shirt entirely myself, fix it, and every thing. And had it been even much more trouble than it really was, the pleasure of having my work approved would have made me ample amends."

Miss C. "You are very amiable, my industrious young friend; and we are all attention, in hopes of hearing the conclusion of your narrative. But I hope the close of the day affords something rather

more

more enlivening. Your evenings, I doubt not, pass more pleasantly."

Miss D. "Oh! yes; that is our favourite time. But I think I had just got to our dinner-hour, which is two o'clock; after that time we have liberty to amuse ourselves till four, when we always attend my papa in the study to say our French lessons, unless he is particularly engaged. Then in an evening, when we neither go out nor have any company, papa instructs us in geography; and questions us in history, which he makes so entertaining, that we are all quite fond of it. After this, Fanny and I do just what we please; and as soon as Charles and William have their lessons ready for the next day, they join us in whatever amusement we like best for the remainder of the evening."

Miss M. "And what in the name of wonder can that be? For no idea of any thing can I form, that but approaches towards it."

Miss D. "We are never at a loss. Sometimes we have a small table to ourselves, and the boys read an entertaining book aloud, while Fanny and I are engaged in what, of all others, is our favourite employment."

Miss M. "And pray what is that?" (*Eagerly.*)

Miss D. "Why, mamma often gives us some old linen, and we make little caps and shirts for poor children."

Miss C. (*After laughing immoderately.*) "Caps and shirts

shirts for poor children! Oh all ye powers of invention! And this is really your favourite—employment? I was going to say amusement; but the word, as if conscious of a misapplication, would not come out. Ha! ha! ha! you must excuse me, my dear Miss Danby, I really cannot forget it. Caps and shirts for poor children!”

Miss M. “Well, had I begun to guess what this beloved employment was, I believe I should have thought of a thousand things before this would have come into my head. Nay, I need not say before, for I am sure I never should have thought of it at all.”

Miss D. “I wonder, ladies, you should think it so unpleasant; especially as I have the management of the linen myself, which makes it so entertaining to cut and contrive every thing to the best advantage. To accomplish this, Fanny and I have many consultations: for though she does not attempt to cut any thing herself as yet, she often assists me in choosing the best method.”

Miss C. “Now tell me seriously, Miss Danby, do you really and truly receive pleasure from this?”

Miss D. (Surprised.) “Indeed I do, Ma’am; surely you cannot doubt it?”

Miss C. “I really believe I cannot; for you are the picture of artlessness and simplicity. Yet from any other lips I should feel inclined to harbour suspicions, which from your ingenuous manner I disclaim.

disclaim. I should be quite delighted to put you into a carriage, whisk you up to London, and there introduce you to those enchanting pleasures which wait the acceptance of young ladies of rank and fashion. I grant you are yet not old enough for such an introduction. I only just wish to give you some idea of the difference between the real enjoyments of life, and those wretched substitutes which you seem to think are worthy of being called so."

Miss D. "Perhaps, after all, I might prefer my own amusements: at least I believe I ought to do so, because they are more suitable to my age and situation in life."

Miss C. "I will try and give you a sketch of the manner in which I hope to pass my time next winter: then you can make a comparison, and form your judgment accordingly. I suppose I shall usually rise about eleven: and while my maid is assisting me to put on my morning dress, run over in my mind the expected occurrences of the day; and if the creature has any taste, possibly consult her on some article of dress. Full of hope and expectation in regard to the coming hours, I repair to the breakfast-table; where the time cannot fail of passing pleasantly; sometimes in laying schemes for spending the morning—sometimes in reading, or hearing read, a new publication, which it is frequently necessary to form an opinion of, in order to be able to speak on the subject in company. When
breakfast

breakfast is over, I generally spend an hour at my piano. Then as the morning advances, there are such various amusements to engage the time, that it is almost impossible but something must occur to drive away dullness—let me see—there is paying visits—attending auctions—riding out—and, above all, the delightful employment of shopping. But if the weather be very bad, and no company comes, and if there be nothing *very* pleasant in view for the evening; why to be sure I might be apt to feel myself a little dull, and be reduced to the necessity of sitting down to a tambour frame, or painting a little, or drawing, or some such employment, till the time for dressing arrives; and then the scene brightens up; for surely there can scarcely be a fashionable house in London, where the family are *quite* destitute of engagements for the evening, either at home or abroad."

Miss M. "That would be a most agreeable thing to me: for I'm sure I passed many a comfortable evening last winter."

Miss C. "You must wait with patience, my dear; and for the present content yourself with pleasure in prospect. Then the very preparation itself for appearing in public, is so delightful! Such enchanting perplexity! such consultations! such arranging of colours, fixing feathers, intermingling diamonds, flowers, &c. and, in short, racking the invention to produce something new, tasty,

tasty, and elegant; that, all together, the scene is a most animating one. I see by your eyes, Arabella, that you long to be in the midst of it."

Miss M. "And what language do the eyes of Miss Danby speak? Can you see the same wish in her countenance? If I am any judge, she hears of all these fine things with the most perfect indifference."

Miss D. "As to the arranging of flowers, I confess I would rather display them to advantage in my garden than any where else; and as to dressing, I never took much pleasure in it, except it was dressing others. I have often been very much pleased with putting new clothes upon some of the little cottage girls, for whom my mamma has given me leave to make a bonnet, cap, or handkerchief. And these are pleasures which I hope I shall always have a relish for. It would be very foolish in me to wish for the enjoyments of high life, as it is very improbable that I shall ever possess any thing that belongs to it."

Miss M. "You are certainly in the right, my dear little moralist, if that be the case; and although I believe I could never take delight in your amusements, yet I must confess I admire the innocence of your mind, and the simplicity of your taste."

Miss C. "I am sure, Miss Maitland, we cannot but confess that we have learnt something by coming into the country. I am impatient to inform
some

some of my acquaintance in London, that I met with an accomplished young lady in Devonshire, who thought there was no enjoyment in life equal to that of making caps and shirts for poor babies, and dressing cottagers. I can just imagine what a look Lady Amelia will give me. Oh! I'm sure I shall never be able to make one of them believe it."

Here this voluble young lady of fashion was interrupted by a servant coming to inform the little party, that Lady Maitland was ready to return home. Her ladyship's visit had been prolonged by her having entered into conversation with Mr. Grey, of whom she inquired many particulars concerning his travels. Lady Maitland requested Mrs. Danby would permit Sophia to return with her, and spend the remaining part of the day at Maitland Hall. But this was a favour which Mrs. Danby was under the necessity of declining, as she had engaged some young ladies to pass the evening with her daughters. However, her ladyship obtained a promise that Miss Danby should dine with her the following day. Sophia felt no great pleasure at the thoughts of this visit, but told her mamma, she believed she should be happier by spending the time at home. Yet she was not the less obliged to her mother for permitting her to go.

In addition to the two young ladies whom I have already mentioned as residing at Maitland Hall, there were on this day some others assembled, who

lived at a distance, and who were strangers to Sophia. There was also in the drawing-room the son and heir of Lord Maitland, a youth of about thirteen years of age, whose slender frame, delicate limbs, and pale complexion, formed a striking contrast to the healthy and robust appearance of the gentlemen's sons who lived in the vicinity of Maitland Hall.

As soon as Sophia entered the drawing-room, this puny but illustrious youth immediately advanced towards her, and, with an air of the utmost self-complacency, handed her to a seat. Sophia thought there was something so unnatural in this overstrained politeness (for such it appeared to her), that she could scarcely forbear smiling when she received from Master Maitland this mark of polite attention; however, it did not serve to impress her with any high idea of his urbanity; for in his countenance there was something that seemed to say, "I hope you are sensible of the difference between a nobleman's son and the daughter of a gentleman farmer, and that you have a proper sense of the favour I am conferring upon you."

Lady Maitland introduced Sophia to the rest of her visitors, the three Miss Bulkely's, the oldest of whom appeared to be about seventeen years of age, and the youngest little more than twelve.

In the evening, cards were proposed; which proposal every one assented to but Sophia, who declared herself

herself not sufficiently skilled in any game to think of sitting down to the table. This objection Lady Maitland took much trouble in endeavouring to remove; and at length Sophia, merely to avoid importunity, consented to make one at the card-table. Commerce was the game fixed upon, as being best known to some of the younger part of the company; but what was the astonishment of Sophia, on perceiving that each of the party deposited half a guinea in the pool? The first idea that occurred was, that she had not more than two or three shillings in her pocket, and that she must suffer her inability to continue her seat to be made known. This thought filled her with a momentary confusion; but, regaining her presence of mind, she considered that if she had even an opportunity of applying to her mother for the sum required, it would not be granted, nor was it in the least degree proper that it should. This reflection relieved her in a great measure from the awkward situation into which she had been thrown. The consciousness of acting with propriety in this unpleasant dilemma, gave her a degree of courage which such a conviction only could bestow: she arose with modest dignity in her looks; and, turning to Miss Maitland, assured her that she had never been accustomed to play for any thing but amusement, and again requested she would permit her to be a spectator of the game. Lord Maitland, who happened to be in the room, on hearing Sophia

say this, told her she must suffer him to have the honour of being her banker for that evening. Sophia felt the impropriety there would be in her complying with this request; she therefore persisted so steadily in refusing what his lordship was so strenuous in soliciting her to accept, that at length he gave up the point, but not without pronouncing her to be a most incorrigible young lady. Greatly pleased at having thus overcome all her difficulties, she sat down quietly by Miss Conyers, saying, that she should have great entertainment in seeing how the game was played by those who understood it so much better than herself. If Miss Danby, when she quitted her seat at the card-table, perceived on the countenances of some present a smile expressive of supercilious contempt, she suffered not herself to feel hurt by this ungenerous display of imaginary triumph. The rectitude of her own mind enabled her to regard with pity every deviation from what was praiseworthy and meritorious in others.

When Miss Danby returned to the beloved circle at Rose Hill, and recounted the particulars of her visit, the endearing tenderness and affectionate praises of her beloved mother, expressed with all the warmth of a fond parent, would have been an ample compensation for having met with circumstances *really* painful: but this was far from being the case; and our amiable little girl looked back on the occurrences

rences of the past day and their consequences with pleasure and complacency.

I must now beg leave to insert a conversation which passed between Miss Conyers and Miss Maitland on the day after the visit we have just mentioned. These young ladies were sitting at work in the dressing-room of Lady Maitland, when Miss Conyers thus expressed herself to her companion :

Miss C. "You appear to be out of spirits, Arabella; are you not well?"

Miss M. "Indeed I am: perfectly well."

Miss C. "What then is the matter with you, my dear?"

Miss M. "The matter? Nothing, I believe."

Miss C. "Your manner convinces me that something or other *has* happened to disconcert you. Come, come, Arabella, tell me at once what whim has seized upon you."

Miss M. "No; I would rather not tell you; for I am persuaded you will only laugh at me, though I never was more serious in my life."

Miss C. "You would rather not tell me!—you are persuaded that I shall laugh at you!—Why, what in the name of wonder possesses you, child? Some curious freak, I dare say. But, come, do hasten and inform me; I am quite impatient to learn what this grand secret is; for a secret I suppose it must be. Shall I promise to be a faithful confidante, and keep it inviolably?"

Miss M. "Don't ask me. I have already said you will certainly laugh at me."

Miss C. "Nothing more likely; and I am very glad you think so; for I don't feel half so gay as I could wish, and your communications may possibly give a more lively turn to my spirits. I am all attention."

Miss M. "This is bad encouragement; however, I will try to explain myself. You know Miss Danby."

Miss C. "Certainly. And what of that?"

Miss M. "Tell me, then, what your real sentiments are respecting her."

Miss C. "That I can very soon do; for I think her an amiable little rustic, who wants nothing but proper instructions to render her, as she grows up, an accomplished young woman; but who, for want of those instructions, is likely to remain an egregious little simpleton."

Miss M. "I differ from you, if this be your opinion of her."

Miss C. "I cannot conceive, child, what you are aiming at; nor would it be easy for a wiser head than mine, I believe, to make such a discovery. If you *do* differ from me in this point, what then?"

Miss M. "Tell me now, sincerely and candidly, if you do not think that in manners, in disposition, and even in understanding, she is greatly my superior. I charge you now to be sincere."

Miss

Miss C. "Your superior! Gracious powers! Did ever so preposterous an idea enter the mind of a rational being? It is impossible, Arabella, that you can be serious. You are inclined to try how many compliments I am disposed to pay you."

Miss M. "You never was more mistaken, I assure you, if you think I am desirous of receiving compliments; for I never felt less ambitious of being so honoured. What I say I really think. In my opinion, there is something about Miss Danby which bespeaks a very noble mind: she appears so artless, so gentle, so unaffected, yet seems to have so much good sense, that I have several times shrunk within myself, as it were, conscious of my own inferiority. And I do believe, simple as you think her, that, if she be not restrained by pure good-nature, in her heart she despises us both."

Miss C. "And what am I to infer from all this? Are you unhappy lest Miss Danby should not think highly of you? Or do you regret that she is possessed of the good qualities you ascribe to her?"

Miss M. "I should hate myself were I capable of envying her because she is amiable; on the contrary, I love and admire her, and shall take great pleasure in her company and conversation."

Miss C. "That is all very well. I'm sure I have no objection to your having a friendship for Miss Danby; for I can't help feeling a partiality for her myself: but that you, who have been brought

brought up in the utmost elegance, and have enjoyed advantages equal to what could be procured by the first families in the kingdom, should put yourself in competition with the daughter of an obscure country gentleman, is so absurd and ridiculous, that I am astonished how you can entertain such a thought, even for a moment."

Miss M. "I must still see this affair in a very different light from that in which you represent it. Miss Danby, however few the advantages she may have received, and whatever the mode of her education may have been, is, in my eyes, one of the most engaging girls, her age considered, that I ever met with: then she appears to be so happy! Surely you could not avoid admiring her behaviour yesterday. I'm sure, had I been thrown into the same situation, I should not have forgotten it for a week to come, I should have been so vexed and mortified. Yet with all the good-nature in the world she sat down by you, and was as cheerful and as good-humoured as if nothing had happened: but I am persuaded it was not for want of feeling the awkwardness of her situation; for you may easily perceive she has great quickness, and a nice sense of what is proper."

Miss G. "Very well, my dear: but admitting all this to be true, I again ask, why should the persuasion of Miss Danby's good qualities make you unhappy?"

Miss M. "I should be very sorry indeed if that
were

were the case: but what I can't help lamenting is, that if I enjoy greater advantages than Miss Danby, I have not profited more by them. If I am placed in a situation more to be desired than hers, why am I not happier? This is so far from being the case, that I am in reality a great deal less so. You are no stranger to the reluctance with which I used to set about performing the tasks given me by my governess, a woman whom you know I never could esteem or respect; how I used to vex myself when I thought my lessons too difficult; and how I used to afflict those about me, and myself most of all, when she insisted on my perfectly accomplishing what she allotted me to do: yet you find Miss Danby goes through all these things, not only with ease, but with pleasure."

Miss C. "But surely you do not admit that her acquirements are equally extensive with those which you are mistress of?"

Miss M. "She has not been taught music, I believe; in most other things I doubt not but she is more perfect than I was at her age. In history and geography she has, I dare say, made some progress; her drawings you have seen and admired; but what I most of all wish to copy in her is, the art of being happy. Last year I imagined that when I was not immediately under the direction of my governess, but was as much mistress of my time as I now am, I should be quite so; but how far am I from
such

such a state! How difficult do I find it to employ myself agreeably, and how impossible to escape from the horrors which arise from low spirits and a discontented temper! Now you find Miss Danby is a total stranger to all this. *Her* hours glide swiftly away, and always find her in the same easy and happy state. Is there not, then, some very great error, either in my disposition, or the manner in which I have been educated? Wherever the fault lies, I am determined to try if I cannot find it out; and when once detected, I will struggle hard to bring about a reformation. I will go to Miss Danby, and I will say, ‘Miss Danby, pity my weaknesses—my faults—and teach me, oh! teach me, how to be happy.’” (*Bursts into tears.*)

Miss C. “Upon my word, Arabella, you both confound and astonish me: but I beg and entreat you will endeavour to overcome this folly, and not give way to notions so extremely absurd.”

Miss M. “Nothing can appear to me more reasonable than my present way of thinking; and I hope soon to convince you, my dear Charlotte, that the consequences I shall derive from it will be both useful and pleasing.”

Miss C. “At present I can neither discern pleasure nor profit in this fine scheme. So! here comes your mamma—I hear her voice on the stairs: should *she* come to the knowledge of these new notions,

notions, there is an end to your romantic friendship at once. You may rely upon it, your favourite little rustic will no longer be a welcome guest at Maitland Hall."

Thus ended the conversation between these two young ladies; and as Miss Maitland did not wish to see her mother until she had regained her composure, she quitted the room at one door, as Lady Maitland entered it at the other.

We will now return to Rose Hill, and, with as much conciseness as circumstances will permit, relate the few remaining particulars which it is necessary to communicate before this history draws to a final close.

One evening, Charles, just as he was going to bed, recollecting that he had left some of the utensils with which he worked in his garden out of their place, went and collected them by the light of the moon, which shone very clear: he was placing them in a little shed, when his ears were struck with the sound of a dismal groan that seemed to issue from the farthest part of it. Charles was unable to determine whether it was the sound of a human voice which he heard, or not, and stood still for a few moments to try whether it would be repeated. It *was* repeated, and in a manner more expressive of anguish than before. The blood in Charles's veins grew chill with horror. "Perhaps," thought he, "this may be some poor wretch, wounded by ruffians, who has sought
shelter

shelter in this hovel ;” and he immediately asked who was there. To this question another hollow groan succeeded, when a faint voice pronounced the following words: “ Oh ! Charles, is that you ? Let me beg of you to pity me, though I do not deserve any pity ; but I am severely punished for my crimes.” Charles instantly recollected the voice of his unhappy friend George Howard ; and running towards the corner whence it proceeded, expressed his surprise at such a discovery : but whether to rejoice or grieve at the incident he knew not. The wretched boy asked whether he thought Mr. Danby would suffer him to remain for one night in his house. “ Surely,” replied Charles, “ you cannot think that my father would deny you so small a favour ; I am sure if it be in his power he will do much more than that for you : but come, let us hasten into the house.” — “ Ah ! dear Charles,” replied the unhappy sufferer, “ you little think what a deplorable condition I am in : let me entreat you first to procure a light and some water, that I may at least be made less frightful to look at.”

Charles ran with all speed to execute this commission, and, in his way to the kitchen, met Mrs. Jane, to whom he communicated this interesting adventure. They immediately provided themselves with plenty of water, some soap, a towel, and a light, and thus proceeded to the shed, at the door of which they beheld George, who, with some difficulty,

culty, had contrived to crawl thither. But who can paint the horror with which they were seized on beholding the object that now presented itself before them? The face of this unhappy boy was pale, ghastly, and stained with blood: his clothes were covered with dirt, and his feet almost bare; over one eye he wore a large patch of brown paper, which, although it concealed the eye itself, could not conceal the swelling which surrounded it, and which showed how greatly it must be injured; and this it was that produced the groans before mentioned, the pain arising from the hurt being very severe.

The things which Mrs. Jane held in her hand had nearly fallen to the ground when her eyes first encountered the pitiable figure just described. The benevolent heart of Charles swelled with pity and compassion while he stood motionless and unable to speak, gazing at the object before him. Their desire of rendering the situation of George less deplorable, however, soon brought them to their recollection. While Mrs. Jane was washing the blood from his face and hair in which it was clotted, Charles ran to his wardrobe, and furnished himself with such things as were necessary to render his appearance more decent. He then desired Mrs. Jane would go and prepare his father to receive George, while he assisted to equip him in his new dress. This she readily undertook to do, and having sent for Mr. Danby out of the parlour, acquainted him with

with the above particulars, which he was no sooner informed of, than he hastened towards the place where the boys were engaged as already described. In his way he met the unhappy culprit, who approached him, leaning on the arm of his son, with tottering steps, and a countenance full of shame and remorse. Mr. Danby endeavoured to sooth and comfort him, while he assisted in conducting him to his study, where they were soon joined by Mrs. Danby. After a few questions respecting the nature of the sufferings under which poor George evidently laboured, that lady removed the patch from his eye, which was no sooner done than a general alarm became visible in the countenances of the spectators. Mrs. Danby shuddered with horror, and Charles hid his face with his hands, not being able to bear so shocking a sight. A surgeon was instantly sent for, and, in the mean time, Mrs. Danby made use of such applications as she thought would best contribute towards allaying the inflammation. It was near twelve o'clock when the surgeon arrived, who, after examining the eye of his patient, did not give Mrs. Danby much room to hope that the sight of it would ever be restored, when she questioned him concerning it.

Early the next morning, Mr. Danby repaired to the chamber of the young invalid, who he found had passed a very restless night; and thinking it highly proper to acquaint Mr. Howard as soon as possible

possible with what had happened, he arrived at the house of that gentleman soon after he had quitted his chamber. As the intelligence which Mr. Danby had to communicate was such a mixture of what would create both sorrow and joy, he endeavoured to avoid either raising the hopes of this worthy man too high, or depressing him too much. But no preparation could arm so kind a parent with fortitude sufficient to bear the interview without being extremely shocked by it.

Breakfast was scarcely ended at Rose Hill before the surgeon arrived, who found his patient very feverish; it was therefore judged necessary that he should remain where he was, which was highly satisfactory to Mrs. Danby, her husband, and brother; as, by having Mr. Howard constantly with them, they hoped by their united efforts to keep his mind in a state of tolerable tranquillity. This was also a desirable point to gain with the son: but George said he never should feel at all easy until he was permitted to unburden his mind, and confess all the errors of which he had been guilty. This his friends would gladly have dissuaded him from doing; but finding that he could not be satisfied to postpone the relation, they thought it best to indulge his wishes; and, availing himself of an interval of ease, he desired his young companions might be called in, when he thus began:

“I was very intimate with one Harry Mason,
who

who lived near our school, and was a day-scholar there. Harry was a very wicked boy, and to be sure it was a sign that I was a bad boy too, or else I should not have kept company with him so much. We were engaged in a great many mischievous tricks, for some of which we were punished, and some we contrived to practise without being discovered. We went on from one thing to another, till one day, when we were walking together in the field that belongs to the school, 'George,' says he, 'I have the finest frolic in my head that ever we have had yet; but were I to give you a month to guess it, I'll lay a crown you would never guess right.' I eagerly desired to know what it was. 'Why,' says he, 'what would you say to our going up to London, seeing all the fine things there, having plenty of money, and being our own masters?' I said, such a scheme would be very pleasant undoubtedly, but that I thought it never could be brought to bear. 'I will engage for that,' he replied, 'if you will promise to join me: not that I ask your assistance in the preparation; what I require of you is, to give me the meeting when all is ready, and away we go!' I asked him how it was possible he could get a sum of money sufficient to defray the expences of such a scheme. 'Nothing more easy,' said he: 'you need not trouble your head about the money-part of the scheme. And as for the displeasure of the old folks,' he added,

added, 'that will not signify a pinch of snuff: for as soon as we find it convenient to return, they will be so glad to see us, that we shall have nothing to do but say we are sorry for what has happened, and all will blow over, and we shall be taken into favour without more to do.'

"How this artful boy procured forty guineas I know not, but am strongly suspicious that he came not honestly by them. For my part, I was but too ready, to be sure, to join in this wicked scheme; but though I tried to make as light of the sinfulness of it as Harry did, yet my conscience often accused me for consenting to it: and I was several times on the point of telling Harry that I had changed my mind. But the fear of his ridicule, and the wish to see London, got the better of my scruples. So, about a week after this plan was first spoken of, I got an order from Harry to meet him at his father's by eight o'clock one evening, when he knew the family were all to be out. I watched my opportunity, and, stealing out of the house unperceived, was soon at Mr. Mason's, where Harry was waiting for me. We ran with all haste to an inn that was in a distant part of the town, from which we knew a stage-coach set out every evening for London. The horses were putting to just as we got there; so we had only to pay our fare, and set off directly.

"When

“ When we had spent all our money in London, except about five guineas, we thought it high time to return home; for, however irksome the idea of meeting our offended parents might be, it was the only means we had of escaping the evils of absolute poverty and want. As we had not money sufficient to travel all the way in the coach, we took our places for eighty miles only, being determined to perform the rest of the journey on foot.

“ On the morning of the third day after having quitted the coach, Harry declared he was so ill, that it was impossible he could walk a step that day unless he grew a great deal better. But instead of growing better he soon became much worse, and was unable to leave his bed. We were now in a sad dilemma; for our money was all spent except a few shillings, and the people of the inn said they must be paid beforehand for what they should do for him. Poor Harry was now sensible that he had committed a very wicked action, and wept most piteously; declaring in a solemn manner, that, were he but once more in his father's house, he would let him see by his future conduct that he was determined on being henceforward the most dutiful of sons. Greatly distressed what to do, I again desired to speak with the landlady, and besought her in the most earnest manner to take compassion upon poor Harry's situation; telling her that he was a gentleman's son, and that if she would send for an apothecary, and supply

supply him with what was necessary, she would certainly be repaid as soon as ever his friends were informed where he was, and could come to his relief. I also told her we had left home in a frolic, but were now heartily sorry for what we had done; and all that we wished for was, to have an opportunity of asking the forgiveness of our parents, which we should be sure to receive. The landlady, after some hesitation, consented to what I proposed; and, going with me to Harry's chamber, sent without further delay to the apothecary, who said, that he believed his illness was chiefly owing to fatigue; which to be sure was very likely, for we had walked seventeen miles the day before, and one-and-twenty the day before that.

"The only way I could now think of was to write a letter to Mr. Mason, which I did in the best manner I could; and then, after taking leave of Harry, and again recommending him to the landlady, set out towards home. I was very sorry to leave him in this situation; but, as I could not pay for my board at the inn, there was no other way left for me to do. When I quitted the inn I had seven shillings in my pocket, besides a silver medal, that Harry made me take at parting, saying, that it would at least procure me a supper and a night's lodging. As it was pretty late in the forenoon when I set out on my journey, I only travelled twelve miles that day; nor did I accomplish more than fifteen the

next, my shoes being worn out, and my feet very sore, it was with great difficulty I got on so well as I did.

“On the third day I passed by the cross-road which leads to the town where Mr. Manly lives; and, having come about half a mile on this side of it, I met the gardener who lives near the school. He no sooner perceived me than he laid hold of me in a violent manner, saying, he was very glad of an opportunity to punish me, adding, ‘I am no longer at a loss to know who it was that stole my eggs, my poultry, and my fruit.’ Guilt and fear prevented me from answering him, for certainly I could not deny the charge; so he beat me as long as he thought proper, and then left me. I was so stunned with the blows he had given me, and my head was so dizzy, that, after staggering a few paces, I fell into a ditch, where a sharp piece of wood ran into my eye, the pain of which was so violent that I thought I must have died: and oh, my dear father! if you did but know how I then grieved for having been so undutiful to the best of parents, you would think that the sufferings of my mind merited some compassion as well as those of my body. But I shall think the loss of my eye a trifle now, since you receive and forgive me: I had not lain very long in the ditch before a countryman came up to me on horseback, and inquired the reason of my lying there.

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I told him in part what had befallen me, and implored his assistance. The man seemed to compassionate my situation, and, having helped me out of the ditch, he endeavoured to stanch the blood which gushed from my eye. He then inquired which was my way home; and, on telling him where I lived, he consented to take me up behind him, saying, that his road lay that way. I thanked him in the best manner I could for his kindness; and taking the medal from my pocket, which I had still preserved, begged of him to accept of it, being the only acknowledgment I could then make him for the favour he was about to confer upon me. I could not, however, prevail upon him to take it and he brought me in safety the last fifteen miles of my journey out of pure good-will. When we got opposite the wood I desired him to set me down, and, being dusk, I crept unperceived into the shed where Charles found me, not having courage to venture into the house.

"The countryman said to me at parting, 'Young gentleman, I believe you have not been so good as you should be; but whatever you may have done amiss, your punishment is sufficient without my reproaching you for your faults, even if I knew you had committed them. Take my advice, however, which you are heartily welcome to, as well as the lift I have given you, and be dutiful and well-minded for the time to come.' Again I thanked him for all his goodness, and promised to do as he desired; and,

I hope, my dear father, that you and all my friends will find I shall never depart from this resolution."

Here George Howard finished his relation: and every one was willing to applaud him for his good intentions in regard to his future conduct. After staying about a week at Rose Hill he accompanied his father home; his health being better, although his eye was still in a very unpromising state, with regard to the sight being restored; but the pain arising from the wound was greatly abated.

Early in May Lord Maitland and his family returned into Devonshire, with the intention of spending the summer months at Maitland Hall. It was with the most sincere joy that Miss Maitland again embraced her friend, the remembrance of whom neither absence nor the gaieties of London could efface. In the society of Sophia Danby this young lady found a charm, which not all the vivacity and elegance that Miss Conyers was thought to possess could bestow. Frequently would she obtain leave to pass the entire day at Rose Hill; and, while her cousin was wasting in sleep the pleasantest hours of the day, she was enjoying the pleasure of an early breakfast with her friends, after being refreshed by the pure breezes of the morning.

The interest which Miss Maitland took in the occupations that engrossed the time and attention of Sophia, and the pleasure with which she listened to the conversation of Mrs. Danby, evinced her natural taste for
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the rational, consequently the superior enjoyments of life. This taste an injudicious education had nearly perverted. To the steady and lasting attachment which she formed with the Danby family may, in a great measure, be attributed that happiness which she enjoyed in a more advanced period: a happiness, resulting from the acquiring worthy principles and virtuous habits.

I must now relate an incident which threw the whole Maitland family into confusion, and which called forth, in Miss Maitland particularly, the sentiments of sympathetic sorrow. One fine morning in June Miss Conyers and her cousin, attended by Master Maitland and two servants, were enjoying the pleasure of a ride on horseback. As they were passing over a small common, a kite, which some boys at no great distance were flying, suddenly dropt, and, fluttering near the head of the horse which Miss Conyers rode, the animal took fright, and galloped off full speed with his young rider. For some time she preserved her seat with surprising firmness; but at length the velocity of the motion dimmed her sight, and rendered her head so confused, that she was no longer able to keep herself from falling. When her affrighted followers approached, they found her totally insensible, and discovered her having received a wound on her head. She soon, however, recovered the use of her senses; and Miss Maitland, raising her head gently from the

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ground,

ground, bound up the wound in the best manner she could. But they soon perceived that the principal injury which Miss Conyers had sustained was in her ankle; for, on attempting to rise, she shrieked so violently with pain, that every one concluded a bone must have been broken by the fall. Happy might it have proved had this been the case; but the hurt was of a nature which admitted not of so easy or speedy a cure as that which usually attends a broken limb.

Miss Maitland dispatched one of the servants for a surgeon, who lived at the distance of about four miles from the place where they were. A poor woman, who lived at a cottage just by, perceiving that something was amiss, came to offer her services to this distressed group; and proposed, on seeing the situation to which Miss Conyers was reduced, their endeavouring to carry her to the cottage. Again they tried to move her; but the extreme anguish she endured obliged them to desist. The woman then said she would try some easier method, and call her husband, who was working in a field just by, to their assistance, and she did not doubt but they would be able to get the lady into the house. In a short time these humane cottagers appeared with a large flat board, on which Miss Conyers was placed with as much care as possible, and thus conveyed to the humble abode, which, but an hour before, she would have been shocked at the idea of entering.

merely from the poverty of its appearance. After some difficulty and much suffering, she was laid upon the only bed which these poor people were possessed of; and which, although it was of the most inferior kind, was decent and clean.

Miss Maitland now wrote a note to her mother with her pencil, informing her of the accident that had befallen her cousin, but in a manner as favourable as possible, requesting her to send a carriage immediately to convey them home. This note was dispatched by the servant, while Master Maitland rode backwards and forwards on the road which lay between the cottage and the house of the surgeon, that he might conduct him to the place where the young ladies impatiently waited his arrival. Often were their watches consulted, often were the minutes counted with inexpressible solicitude. At length he galloped up to the cottage, and, hastily dismounting, proceeded to examine the wounds of his patient. The one on her head he assured her would be of no consequence; but with regard to the other it was impossible to avoid creating an alarm, for he would on no account consent to her removal from the cottage.

My readers will readily conceive the additional distress which this dreadful intelligence must have created. What a lesson for pride and vanity! This young lady, who, but a few hours before, would have counted it a heavy misfortune to be deprived of

any of those elegances by which she had always been surrounded, was now lying helpless and in pain, on a wretched bed in a miserable cottage. A change so sudden, and so afflictive, was more than a mind like Miss Conyers's could sustain with any degree of fortitude. She wept, she wrung her hands, she appealed in agony to those around her, entreating to know if there was no way, no possible way of averting some of the evils which appeared so insupportable. The surgeon assured her, that unless she endeavoured to compose her spirits, and acquire a more tranquil frame of mind, an alarming fever must unavoidably be the consequence of her imprudence, which he said they must take every possible means of preventing. This remonstrance had the desired effect: death was before her eyes; and, shocking as her present situation appeared, its horrors were light, when put in competition with those of a nature so much more awful.

The surgeon had but just performed the necessary operations when Lady Maitland's carriage appeared. Her ladyship was not prepared to find her niece in a situation so distressing as that which has just been described: she exerted herself, however, as much as possible, in order to soften the affliction, and make the calamity appear less dreadful. After saying every thing she could think of that was likely to produce this effect, she hastened back to the Hall, to make such an arrangement as was necessary to

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render this poor cottage as comfortable as circumstances would admit.

Lady Maitland sent a note to Mrs. Danby as soon as she arrived at her own house, requesting she would have the goodness to repair to the place where Miss Conyers was confined; which she immediately did, accompanied by Sophia. This was the first visit these ladies paid to the cottage, but it was succeeded by a great many subsequent ones. No person was found to have so much influence over the mind of Miss Conyers as Mrs. Danby. Her superior judgment, joined to the affectionate tenderness of her disposition, gave her an advantage over every other friend that visited this unhappy young lady, who was obliged to pass upwards of nine weeks under the roof of this humble dwelling: nor did she quit it with any assurance from her surgeon that she would ever be restored to the perfect use of her leg. In a few weeks more this painful suspense was changed into dreadful certainty.

When we look back to the period in which this volatile young lady saw nothing before her but scenes of gaily, splendour, and delight—a delight, which beauty, rank, and riches bestow—it will be easy to conceive what must be the poignancy of her sufferings, on finding that all her gay and flattering expectations must be crushed by the cruel circumstance of being lame for ever. With what propriety could she now enter the brilliant circles where she hoped

for many years to make a distinguished figure? To join in the cheerful dance, where she had so often appeared with an air so elegant, and a step so graceful, was a pleasure she must no longer partake of. Had Miss Conyers taken delight in those innocent recreations which leave on the mind sentiments favourable to virtue, and which may be enjoyed without stepping beyond the narrow but endearing circle of domestic life, those pleasures might still have been her own. Had she cultivated a taste for such employments as are calculated to yield a solid and lasting satisfaction, she would have been a stranger to that discontented and repining spirit, which in the midst of ten thousand blessings, rendered her wretched and comfortless. Had she, like Miss Maitland, corrected the errors to which, from her disposition, her education, and her habits of life, she was unhappily attached, she might still have been an ornament, as well as a blessing to her family.

Anxiously solicitous that the characters which I have brought to the view of my young readers may be considered by them with a degree of attention that will produce some happy and lasting effect upon their own, I earnestly recommend them to their serious and candid consideration. May the folly and danger of an undue attachment to frivolous pursuits deter them from encouraging a fondness for what is so prejudicial to every moral feeling, every virtuous principle! For, without rectitude of heart

and propriety of conduct, how melancholy a subject for contemplation is the human mind ! But, on the contrary, where cultivated talents unite with real excellence of character, how beautiful a picture does such a combination unfold to our view ! And if to acquire the good opinion of our fellow-creatures is pleasing and desirable, who can express the joy and satisfaction which must arise from the consciousness of having obtained the favour and approbation of God—of that God, who delights in the happiness of his creatures, and who will reward with never-ending felicity those who sincerely serve and faithfully obey him ?

Happy, thrice happy are those, who in early life pursue such a mode of conduct as preserves them from the commission of crimes, which, if even in some measure atoned for by future rectitude, must be attended by many an agonizing reflection. But when the mind has once lost its native purity, the difficulty of returning to a virtuous course is so great, that it is to be feared numbers fail in so arduous a trial.

Sorry I am to say, that when I review the characters which compose this history, there is one, who, if ever he struggled to emancipate himself from the slavery of vice, failed in a conflict which was too severe for one whose mind was degraded by habitual wickedness and depravity. The character I allude to is Harry Mason, whom we left at an inn

in a very comfortless situation, the horrors of which were augmented by the consciousness of having brought upon himself all the evils he endured by his own misconduct.

Mr. Mason no sooner received George Howard's letter than he hastened to the relief of his unhappy son, whose sufferings were such as precluded this tender father from so much as mentioning the distressing subject which had occasioned them, except it was to soothe and tranquillize the mind of this unhappy culprit, who testified so much contrition for the guilt and folly he had practised, that his father was led to believe his repentance would be as lasting as it appeared to be sincere. But this hope proved vain and delusive: for no sooner was Harry restored to health, and reinstated in his father's house as well as his affections, than he abused the favours he enjoyed, by pursuing the same vicious habits he had been for some time compelled to relinquish. The friends of Mr. Mason perceiving that his health was injured and his peace destroyed, by constantly witnessing the enormities which this incorrigible boy continued to practise, prevailed on him to try the effects of absence, under such restrictions as appeared best calculated to produce the desired effect. Happily a person was found who consented to take under his care this dissolute youth, and whose fidelity and prudence perfectly well qualified him for such an undertaking. This gentleman made frequent

frequent voyages to the West Indies, and, in a few days after he had taken charge of Harry, set sail for the island of Jamaica. For two years he tried by every means in his power to effect a reformation in the mind and manners of his pupil, but totally without success: at the expiration of that time Harry quitted his kind patron without giving him the smallest intimation of what his intentions were, and, it was feared, perished on the continent of America. So dreadful a catastrophe gave a severe shock to the friends of this infatuated young man; nor was the concern which George Howard testified on the occasion either slight or of short duration; and, when he looked back to the period from which he dated his own return to peace and virtue, he regarded with thankfulness the accident that appeared to be a means of effecting so happy a change.

As this young man had totally lost one eye, and had some degree of weakness in the other, he could not apply closely to study; his father, therefore, endeavoured to give him a taste for such employments as were likely to promote his health and afford him amusement. Agriculture and botany engaged much of his attention; and Mr. Howard had the unspeakable satisfaction of seeing his beloved son fully gratified with the enjoyment of those tranquil pleasures which rural and domestic life afford.

The eldest Miss Masters gave her mother an infinite deal of trouble, and brought herself into many unpleasant

unpleasant situations, by betraying an obstinacy of temper that had been strengthened by too much indulgence, and which at length was the cause of engaging her in difficulties from which, for many years of her life, she was unable to extricate herself. The youngest of these ladies possessed fine talents and various accomplishments; but the admiration which these qualifications excited was frequently succeeded by disgust, from the satirical turn of her disposition.

How different are the conduct and manners of Henrietta Walker! This amiable girl, at the age of thirteen years, was deprived by death of one of the best of mothers; but a kind Providence did not fail to reward her dutious behaviour, by raising her up friends when affliction sat heavy upon her young mind. A lady, in the neighbourhood, who was well acquainted with the sweetness of her disposition, took pity on her destitute and friendless situation, and removed her to her own house. Henrietta made the most grateful returns to her kind patroness for the protection she afforded her; and by her unwearied assidivities, mitigated the sorrows attendant on long and painful illnesses, and upon every occasion conducted herself so as to gain the entire affections of her venerable friend. This friend did not fail to reward her services in a manner suitable to their importance.

Edward Falkland, from a lively and impetuous temper, was betrayed into some indiscretions; but

an excellent understanding, assisted by a liberal and judicious education, enabled him soon to be sensible of, and correct, the improprieties of his conduct.

Something similar to the character of this young man was that of Frank Molineux; but a little time and reflection, aided by the good advice of kind and attentive friends, produced the happiest effects. Of Maria Molineux I will only say, that she was every way worthy of the friendship which Miss Danby had always entertained for her.

As I am willing to leave on the minds of my readers impressions of the most agreeable nature, I have reserved for the concluding pages a picture of domestic happiness, which I trust will, in a degree, and in many respects, apply to numbers who contemplate it. Mr. and Mrs. Danby, and Mr. Grey, saw their days pass away in as happy a state as the frailties and imperfections of mortality admit of. To the lesser evils of life they gave no more importance than their nature would justify; and always kept their minds prepared to endure with fortitude whatever afflictions it should please Providence to appoint them. The pleasure and gratitude which filled their hearts when they reflected on the various and inestimable blessings they enjoyed, is not to be described; those only, whose minds are replete with piety, benevolence, and affection, can form any idea of a felicity such as that felt by these excellent parents.

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Nor was Mr. Grey less interested for, or less delighted with, the admirable young people who surrounded him. The distinguished abilities which Charles Danby discovered as his years increased, justified every expectation that was formed of him at an earlier period. The errors he committed were never deliberate ones, but the effect of quick feelings, and of a disposition perhaps a little too volatile; but never was there a more ingenuous mind, nor one more open to conviction, when the kind admonitions of friendship pointed out the faults into which he had been inadvertently led. If William possessed a less brilliant understanding, and a sensibility that was less easily awakened, he evinced a correctness of judging, thinking, and acting, in which he was equalled by few of his years, while his heart was the seat of every manly, every social virtue.

The encomiums which justice demands from my pen, while I endeavour to characterize the gentle, the elegant, the unassuming Sophia, who has frequently been the subject of these pages, will not, I hope, be thought the effect of any undue partiality. If ever a benevolent smile, an intelligent look, or the blush of unaffected modesty, adorned the manners and appearance of a young lady, Sophia Danby derived all the advantages which graces such as these have to bestow: but the worth of this excellent girl is best expressed by the affection which her family,

mily, her friends, and her indigent neighbours have conceived for her. In the love with which she inspires those around her, may we trace the many virtues which her daily conduct exhibits to their view. And never were two sisters more tenderly attached to each other than were the Miss Danbys. If Fanny saw and admired what she deemed superior endowments in her sister, Sophia was no less charmed with the innocent gaiety, the engaging simplicity of Fanny, who had all that vivacity which so peculiarly belongs to youth and innocence.

George, in some respects, differed greatly from his brothers and sisters: his attention, as he grew up, became so much occupied by books, that his countenance acquired a cast uncommonly serious, and he obtained the title of the little philosopher.

After sincerely wishing that my young readers may derive *some* amusement and *more* instruction from the foregoing pages, I will now close this little history with the following favourite lines:

" 'Tis not for mortals always to be blest:

" But him the least the dull or painful hours

" Of life oppress, whom sober Sense conducts,

" And Virtue, through this labyrinth we tread.

" Virtue and Sense I mean not to disjoin:

" Virtue and Sense are one; and, trust me, he

" Who has not virtue is not truly wise.

" Virtue,

"Virtue, the strength and beauty of the soul;
 "Is the best gift of Heav'n; a happiness,
 "That e'en above the smiles and frowns of fate;
 "Exalts great Nature's favourites: a wealth
 "That ne'er encumbers; nor to baser hands
 "Can be transfer'd; it is the only good
 "Man justly boasts of, or can call his own."

George, in some respects, differed greatly from his brothers and sisters: his attention, as he grew up, became so much occupied by books, that his countenance acquired a far more commonly serious and he obtained the title of the philosopher. After sincerely wishing that my young readers may derive some amusement and some instruction from the foregoing pages, I will now close this little history with the following favorite lines:

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 "Virtue and Sense are one; and, truth to say,
 "Which is not virtue is not truly wise."

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